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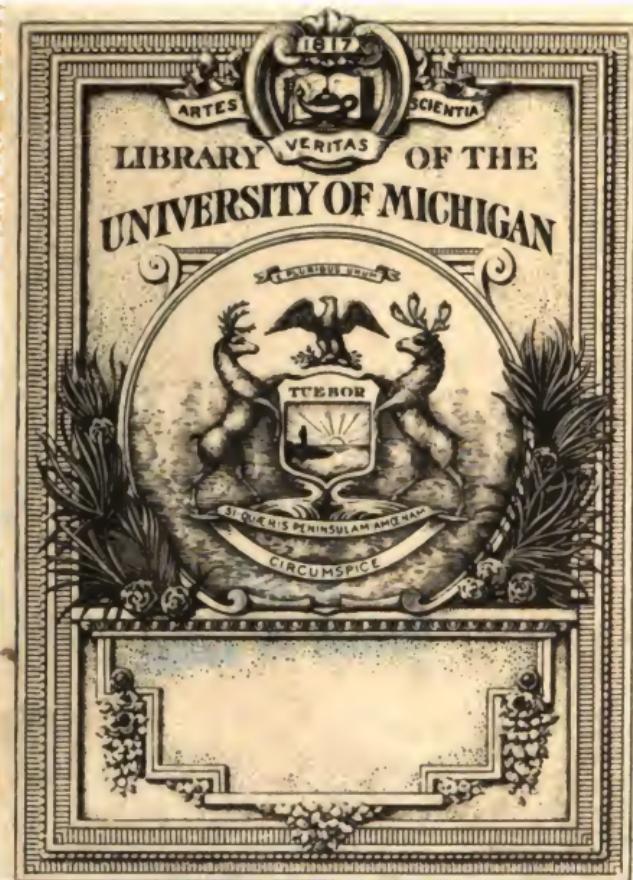
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THE GIFT OF
J. H. Russell

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ODD-FELLOWSHIP

EXAMINED

In the Light of Scripture and Reason.

BY

JOSEPH T. COOPER,
PASTOR OF THE SECOND ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

Sit Lux.

GEN. XLIX. 6.—“O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto
their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.

PHILADELPHIA:
WILLIAM S. YOUNG, 173 RACE STREET.

1853.

**Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853,
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*Gift
V H Russell
6-27-33*

P R E F A C E .

THE following Lectures were written and delivered by their author without any view to their publication. They originated in a deep conviction that the influence of the Order of Odd-Fellows was adverse to the interests of society, both in its civil and ecclesiastical relations. This conviction was followed by an earnest desire that the grounds on which it rested should be made known to the members of his own flock, to whose spiritual welfare the author has devoted more than thirteen years of his life. Having, therefore, provided himself with the latest and most reliable authorities, he entered upon the examination, the result of which the reader has before him in the following six Lectures.

These Lectures were delivered in his own church, on each successive Thursday evening, to a large audience, many of whom, we have been informed, were members of the Order. It is proper to say that, with very few exceptions, the speaker was listened to with every mark of attention and respect; and

we are happy to know (if the information received can be relied upon) that the views of many, in reference to the Order, were, at the conclusion of the course of Lectures, very different from what they had previously been, and among them were not wanting some of the members of the Order.

It was not, however, with the expectation that these Lectures would induce a single Odd-Fellow to break the strong ties by which he is bound to the fraternity, that they were delivered. Indeed, the author knew not that any of this class would give them a hearing. Nor is he influenced by any expectation of this sort in now giving them, at the solicitation of many who heard them, a still greater publicity. The influences by which such persons are surrounded are all unfavourable to such a result, as the reader will partially discover before he comes to the conclusion of this volume. He has another object in view; and that is, to guard the young, and inexperienced, and thoughtless from forming a connexion with it or any kindred institution; and he feels somewhat encouraged to do so from the fact that instances are not unknown to him in which his labours thus far, in this respect, have been blessed. Among its two hundred thousand members, we apprehend there is a very considerable number that have been drawn into the Order without giving the subject any examination,

or at least such an examination as its importance demands. The little book which the author would now present to the public, may be of some assistance to those who are exposed to the same influences which have induced so many thousands to enter the "Mystic Temple." It will at least show them, we apprehend, that there are two sides to this question, and that, as wise men, it becomes them to consider the whole subject in all its aspects. Could the author succeed thus far, he would have little apprehension as to the result.

There appears to be a necessity for something of the kind. While there have been put in circulation books, great and small, setting forth the glories of Odd-Fellowship, and that, too, in a style and manner exceedingly adapted (we do not say intended) to deceive the unwary, the author has not met with any work designed to expose the groundlessness of its pretensions, and the injurious tendencies of its principles. That there are not books of this description in circulation, is certainly a matter of surprise, when it is well known that there are multitudes in the community, and especially among the Christian portion of it, who entertain not a doubt that the influence of the Order is adverse to Christianity and the public good. The inactivity which has characterized those who entertain such sentiments in relation to it, is certainly to be greatly

lamented. Its effect is now seen in the vast increase of the Order. Surely, if this Order be such as thousands believe it to be, and such as we are persuaded its authorized publications show it to be, it is time that those who have at heart the good of society, and who "tremble for the ark of God," should speak out on this subject in tones of solemn warning. How far the utterances of the author are adapted to the necessities of the times, the reader will of course judge for himself.

From the frequency with which the advocates of this and similar institutions employ the terms "bigotry," "prejudice," "ignorance," "narrow-mindedness," &c., the author of the following Lectures expects to receive his full share of such opprobrious epithets. "Such smitings," however, (would that he could say that they are those of "the righteous,") "shall not break his head." There was a time when it moved him not a little to be called a bigot; that time, however, has gone by—not, indeed, that bigotry is any less the object of his abhorrence, but he has learned that it is with many nothing more than a term employed to express contempt for those whose views come in conflict with their own, and that it is not uncommon for those to be called bigots who faithfully apply the divine word as the supreme standard of truth and duty. The author, therefore, expects to

receive his full share of such reproach. At the same time, he is not without hopes that there will not be wanting members of the Lodge with whom the considerations presented in the following Lectures will meet with something more than the stale cry of bigotry.

The author would take the liberty of here laying before the reader a letter received by him on the day after the delivery of the last Lecture from a gentleman with whom he had never previously spoken. It is insertrd as a specimen of similar expressions received by the author in relation to the character of the following Lectures, and the prevalence of a desire for their publication. As the publication of the writer's name would no doubt expose him to the opposition of an Order whose members abound in his neighbourhood, and as the letter is inserted without his knowledge, prudence has dictated the propriety of withholding his signature.

REV. DR. COOPER—*Dear Sir;* I congratulate you very sincerely as having brought your “Lectures on Odd-Fellowship” to a triumphant close.

Circumstances prevented my enjoying the hearing of the whole series; but having attended four of them, I assure you, sir, I have not regretted it as time lost or misspent. The testimony of so obscure an individual will avail but little, I am aware, with the unthinking masses. You have deserved the spontaneous expression of thanks from

the community, the church of Christ, and especially from the *ministry*. It was indeed a grievous—a saddening statement you were *compelled* to make in your winding up—the reasons or causes *why* so little countenance and sympathy, and attendance of your fellow-labourers, as teachers and defenders of the truth, had marked the meetings. The *fact* had not escaped me; but the *causes* assigned—unquestionably correct—I had not considered. Ah! it was not in Isaiah's time alone that it might be said, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.”

In conversing on the subject of the Lectures with one of the pastors of the district, he did not *disapprove* of them, nor question the motive that had prompted the speaker, but he had been told by a member and deacon of his own church—a reputedly *very pious man*—who had listened to *one* of the Lectures, that the *manner and spirit* of the lecturer would defeat his object entirely with him; I replied that the representation of the good man was devoid of the least foundation; that neither “vituperation,” nor “sneer,” nor “slander” of the “Order,” was once employed. I am happy to think my testimony was received as being “more probably” the correct representation. I name the circumstance to show *how* the victims of the delusion have listened to your efforts in your attempt to lift the veil from off this new phase of the “mystery of iniquity,” for such it manifestly is.

It would gladden me to find some number of *perverts* coming out from among them; but the wish, it may be supposed, is “father to the hope.”

I consider the *Order*, in the mass, as the very scum of society, in point of morality and in point of mental or intellectual capacity. I have been astonished on leaving the house each evening of the Lectures, to hear the ri-

bald, profane, and senseless remarks that have been made by knots of them. It seemed not to occur to them that their Grand Scribe, Grosh, with the whole "seventy" and odd sophs, who appended their names, all shared in the vilification they heaped, as they believed, upon the facts, and the deductions elicited from the facts which had passed in review before them.

After all, it is a real pity—a crime, shall we term it?—that the *church of Christ* has permitted such an excrescence to grow into so formidable a rival in the way of administering to the necessities of the poor, and those ready to perish. A member of the Order, for whom I have the profoundest regard as a Christian, says he knows of no feature in the organization, deserving a moment's regard or consideration of the Christian, aside from its *benevolent* aspects. I am sorry such a censure, as here implied, is at all chargeable upon the church—perhaps too justly.

I intended to ask whether the Lectures are to be published? For one, I shall be exceedingly glad to see them in print. I was among those who thought you had been too mild and lenient; but having heard your apology and defence, I yield my opinion with all deference to your milder and more prudential course, and have only to repeat what I stated, that an opinion from a source so obscure and unknown, can weigh but little.

Had there been the least opening to do so, I should have moved a vote of thanks publicly last evening at the close of the performance of your labours. In lieu, please accept the most cordial thanks of one who, personally unknown to you, may be permitted nevertheless to assure you that he regards every attempt, by whomsoever made, to guard divine truth, or to defend it from the obloquy of

its pseudo friends, as a service rendered our blessed Master in our common behalf. With this assurance, and my poor prayers for your health, and usefulness, and happiness, I remain,

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Yours in the bonds of a common faith,

* * * * *

Since the delivery of these Lectures, "The Odd-Fellow's Text Book" of 1852, by Paschal Donaldson, a 12mo. of 286 pages, has been put into the author's hands. Although a well-authenticated work, it contains but little information not to be found in "The Manual." The reader will, however, find a few extracts from it inserted in the form of foot-notes.

That this humble effort may be instrumental in doing good, is the sincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

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LECTURES ON ODD-FELLOWSHIP.

LECTURE I.

MY FRIENDS: It is not without due consideration that I have selected for my subject the character of the Society of Odd-Fellows, and the light in which it becomes us, as professing Christians, to regard it.

I am fully sensible that the task which I have undertaken will bring down upon me the opposition of a host of persons living in this community, and in all probability expose me to the displeasure of some who are in the habit of attending upon my ministry. The opprobrium which was heaped upon a distinguished divine of this city, for the public lectures delivered by him on the subject of secret societies, is still fresh in my recollection, and the circumstance of his resigning his charge a short time after the delivery of these lectures, is an indication too plain to be mis-

taken by the attentive observer of passing events, that decided and public opposition to secret associations, on the part of a gospel minister at the present time, involves in it a risk of no ordinary character. I am aware, too, that the opposition which I shall in all probability incur, will be that of a *secret* foe—one whose operations are concealed behind closed doors, and watched by outside and inside sentinels; and if “open rebuke is better than secret love,” to what shall we compare secret enmity?

I am also aware of the vast numbers that are associated with secret societies, and particularly with the Order of Odd-Fellows, and of the fact that their members are to be found in our churches—that they may be seen not only in the pew, but at the sacramental table, and even at the sacred desk. In addition to this, it has not been forgotten by me that these persons have their relatives and friends, who are ready to vindicate the position which they occupy, and resent the efforts of those who would call it into question. All these things have presented themselves to my mind, in view of the discussion of this sub-

ject ; and it would be vain to deny that their influence was felt to no inconsiderable degree. The attitude in which I appear before you this evening, my friends, has not been without a struggle, and for some time a painful struggle, between a carnal fear and a conviction of duty. But the conviction of duty I have allowed to prevail, as I trust I shall ever, by the grace of God, be enabled to do. And now let me say to you, one and all, that whatever any of you may think of my performance, or however you may characterize my motives, this task has been attempted from a sincere regard to the interests of this community, and under a solemn sense of my responsibility to Him "whose I am, and whom I serve, and who has given me this charge : "And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."

I have referred to the society of Odd-Fellows, and the question may be asked, Why select this society ? My answer is, It has acquired a popularity, and is exerting an influence, to which no other secret society, of which I am aware, has attained in this com-

munity. It may be regarded at the present time as the king of all those secret associations with which the country is so rife; and I wish to "fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king."* Some of the remarks which I shall have occasion to make, will apply to all secret associations, and all of them, as far as principles are involved, will apply to the society of Masons, to which institution there may be objections that are not so directly applicable to any of the others. For these reasons, therefore, as well as from the fact that I wish my remarks to be as definite as possible, I have selected for examination the society of Odd-Fellows.

And here I wish in advance to say, that I am abundantly provided with materials for the discussion of this subject. I have had lying before me the following works, the title pages of which you will allow me to read. The first is, "Digest of the Laws of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows, to which is added an Appendix, containing the Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules of the Order; all necessary

* The Order of Odd-Fellows is the largest secret association of the age.—*Odd-Fellows Text Book of 1852.*

Forms, and the Funeral Ceremony: prepared by the following committees, appointed by Grand Sire Sherlock, at the communication of 1846: James L. Ridgely, Howell Hopkins, Robert H. Griffin, Wm. E. Parmenter. Published by order of the Grand Lodge of the United States." We have also had for consultation "The constitution, by-laws, and rules of La Fayette Lodge, No. 18 of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows of the State of Pennsylvania." This book was kindly presented to me by the gentleman who has charge of the Odd-Fellows store in Sixth street, and from whom I purchased the one previously mentioned, and the very important one lately published, containing 384 12mo. pages, of which the following is the title: "The Odd-Fellows' Manual, illustrating the History, Principles, and Government of the Order, and the Instructions and Duties of every Degree, Station, and Office in Odd-Fellowship, with Directions for Laying Corner Stones, Dedicating Cemeteries, Chapels, Halls, and other Public Edifices; Marshalling Funeral and other Processions; Forms for Petitions, Reports, &c.: also, Odes, with Music for va-

rious Occasions; embellished with numerous Engravings of the Emblems, &c. By Rev. Aaron B. Grosh, P. G. in Lodge No. 164, and P. C. P. in Encampment No. 17 of northern New York; late Grand Conductor in the R. W. Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and P. D. D. G. Patriarch of the R. W. Grand Encampment of Pennsylvania. Berks District, Philadelphia, 1852." From this you will perceive that the author is not only a *reverend* gentleman, but one who, if we may judge from the multiplicity of his official titles, is every way qualified to give us all the information which the obligations of the society will suffer its members to communicate to the public. But this is not the only evidence of its reliability. The work is dedicated by the author to "Henry S. Patterson, M. A., Past Grand Master of the R. W. Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows of Pennsylvania, and late Grand Representative from the same to the R. W. Grand Lodge of the United States." We have still more indubitable evidence of the trust worthy character of this Manual. It bears what is called "Endorsement of the Manual by the

Grand Representatives of the Session, September, 1852." This "endorsement" is signed by the Grand Representatives of no less than twenty-seven States of the Union, including seventy-four names of the most distinguished dignitaries of the Order.* The

* The following is a list of the names attached to the "endorsement:"

Maine.
W. R. SMITH,
C. C. HARMAN.

New Hampshire.
TIMO. G. SENTER,
STEPHEN H. SIMES,
J. C. LYFORD.

Vermont.
CHARLES W. BRADBURY,
ALBERT TINGBURY.

Massachusetts.
W. ELLISON,
W. H. JONES,
JOSEPH L. DREW,
JOHN R. MULLIN.

Rhode Island.
JAMES WOOD,
H. A. MANCHESTER,
WM. HICKS.

Connecticut.
CHOLWELL J. GRUMAN,
SAMUEL LYNES,
LLOYD E. BALDWIN.

New Jersey.
F. D. MULFORD.
JAMES M. CASSADY,

Pennsylvania.
J. ALEXANDER SIMPSON,
GEORGE SLIGO,
JAS. B. RUPLE,
HENRY FRANCIS ANNERS.

Maryland.
JOSHUA VANSANT,
B. F. ZIMMERMAN.

District of Columbia.
W. B. MAGRUDER.

Virginia.
EDWARD P. HUNTER,
ISRAEL ROBINSON,
E. C. ROBINSON.

North Carolina.
JOHNSTON B. NEWBY,
T. H. HARDENBERGH,
WALTER L. STEELE.

"endorsement" is in the following words :
 "The undersigned, members of the Grand
 Lodge of the United States, at its annual

New York.

EDGAR C. DIBBLE,
JAS. P. SANDERS.
DANIEL BARNARD,
ANDRE FROMENT.

Wm. E. JENNINGS,
C. R. HANSFORD,
N. G. SHELLY.

Mississippi.

WM. CRUTCHER,
AUGUST. FOUT.

Louisiana.

G. W. RACE,
J. CRICKARD.

Ohio.

NELSON HAYWARD,
WM. CHIDSEY.

Kentucky.

WM. MATHEW,
I. D. WILLIAMSON.

Tennessee.

ELIJAH MORTON,
THO. T. SMILEY,
WM. S. MUNDAY.

THOMAS WILDEY, P. G. Sire.
JOHN SESSFORD, jr , Grand Marshal.
GEO. S. MORRIS, P. G. M. of Pa.
WM. H. WITTE, P. G. M of Pa.
W. G. WILLIAMS, Grand Master of Ohio.

South Carolina.

R. W. SEYMOUR,
JOHN A. GYLES.

Georgia.

EDWARD S. KEMPTON,
LUTHER J. GLENN.

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OLIVER DUFOUR,
P. A. HACKLEMAN.

Illinois.

WM. ROUNSEVILLE,
JOHN G. POTTS.

Missouri.

CLARK H. GREEN,
JOHN SIBBY,
W. H. REMINGTON.

Arkansas.

P. NORMAN.

Texas.

E. P. HUNT.

Iowa.

W. D. MC'CORD.

session, 1852, hereby recommend to the brethren at large, the Manual of Odd-Fellowship of Bro. P. G. A. B. Grosh as a complete and faithful history of the principles, instructions, work, and organization of the Order. It is full and accurate in its details, harmonious in conception and execution, and its instructions may be confidently relied upon

I have critically examined the Odd-Fellows Manual prepared by brother Grosh, and am happy to say that it meets my approval, and would cheerfully recommend it to the brethren of the Order. J. M. WILLEY,

P. G. M. of Connecticut,
and G. Chaplain of Grand Lodge U. S.

It affords me pleasure to say, I believe it to be by far the best work on Odd-Fellowship ever published. Every Odd-Fellow, who takes any interest in the Order, should have a copy. I will aid in its sale to the utmost of my ability, being confident that every one who purchases a copy will be benefited thereby.

ALEX. E. GLENN, G. Sec. of Ohio.

We have examined with much gratification the "Odd-Fellows Manual," prepared by brother A. B. Grosh, and confidently recommend it to the brethren as a work well calculated to enlist their attention, and at the same time guide them to the truths which are inculcated by the principles of our Order.

Wm. CURTIS, Grand Secretary G. L. of Pa.

Wm. ENGLISH, P. G. No. 154.

as correct. It is a work that should be in the hands of every brother desirous of having an intelligent comprehension of Odd-Fellowship."

Such are the materials with which your speaker has furnished himself, and upon a careful and impartial examination of which he will base his objections to this Order. Let no one, then, say that he is ignorant of the "principles, instructions, work, and organization of the Order;" that he has not an "intelligent comprehension of Odd-Fellowship." Let me remark, that since I entered upon the examination of this subject, I have not read a single line written in opposition to this or any other secret society. The remarks which I shall have occasion to make, in the course of this discussion, have not been suggested by the testimony of enemies, but founded directly upon the representations of its friends and defenders. From these we take our premises, and on these base our conclusions, and shall leave you to judge of their fairness. In forming this judgment, allow me to express the hope that you will not suffer your decision, in relation to the merits of our argument, to rest

upon the weakness or strength of one or more of our objections, considered apart from the rest, but that you will consider the whole in their connexion. An impartial verdict cannot be rendered until *all* the testimony has been weighed. We speak to you, my friends, as to wise men, and therefore we expect you to avoid the conduct of him who “answereth a matter before he heareth it”—conduct which the wisest of men has pronounced to be a “folly and shame.”

I trust there is no occasion for me to disavow a feeling of personal hostility to any of the members of this Order, as prompting me to engage in this discussion. Those who know me will not, I am sure, attribute to me such a motive, and those who know me not must, of course, make the charge (if make it they will) without evidence. The candid and considerate will perceive, with but little reflection, that the very nature of the position which I occupy, in opposing a popular Order, affords *prima facie* evidence of sincerity and disinterestedness.

Surely no one has a right to object to a public discussion of the merits of a society,

claiming, as this society does, the patronage of the community ; and therefore no one can be justly offended at me for delivering these lectures—and the more especially as I propose to confine myself to an examination of the authentic documents which the society, under its own *imprimatur*, has seen proper to publish to the world. Whatever may be said of others, *I am under no pledge of secrecy*. And surely those who claim for themselves such a large measure of charity, will recognise my right, as a Christian minister, to set before those who may think worth while to hear me, the reasons which have brought me to the conviction, that the influence of this popular and wide-spread association is not for the public good. The position occupied by our own church in relation to secret societies, has subjected me, as a minister of the gospel, to no little opprobrium ; and is it too much to ask of the members of my own charge, and others, residing in this community, a patient hearing of my views, and the more especially as there are multitudes among the ministry and members of all the churches who cordially sympathize with us in these views ?

Hear me, then, while I lay before you the objections which I have to this Order:

1. *It justly exposes itself to the contempt and ridicule of the wise and manly.* The very name it bears is calculated to awaken such feelings in the breasts of enlightened men. Perhaps you may say, this is a matter of very small consequence. Comparatively speaking, it is. But it possesses an importance which makes it worthy of our notice as rational, intelligent beings. Names ought to be descriptive of character; and if this name is to be regarded in this light, those who refuse to make us acquainted with their mysteries, without an initiation on our part, have no reason to expect that we should form a favourable opinion of it from the name it bears. As no wise man wishes to be regarded as an *odd-fellow* in reality, have we any right to suppose that he would be willing to bear the name? Should a society be formed in the community, bearing the name of the Order of Silly-Fellows, would not this very name bring upon it the contempt of men who had any regard for their respectability? However, then, the case may be now, with respect

5 ODD-FELLOWSHIP.

to the society of Odd-Fellows, we affirm that the very name which it has written upon its forehead, affords presumptive evidence, of the strongest character, that its origin was any thing but respectable. Is it any wonder that, as the author of the Manual observes, "the world once thought, as a few seem yet to suppose, that to be an Odd-Fellow, a man must be 'a jolly, roistering blade,' full of quirps and jests, ready to crack his joke, or sing his song, or play off some rude trick on a stranger, or engage in a drinking bout, or gourmandizing feast." Strange if the world should think otherwise. Are we not to expect *oddities* from *odd-fellows*?

But not only is the very name calculated to awaken such feelings, but what intelligent man can contemplate with any other feelings many of the exhibitions of this order? Are not the regalia worn by Odd-Fellows utterly inconsistent with that simplicity and gravity which should ever characterize full-grown men? Just think, my friends, of a company of men with aprons, and ribbands, and rosettes, and other tinsels, fastened about them, and having drawn swords in their hands! We know

that there is no disputing about tastes ; but we cannot help thinking that the taste of a person, who can glory in such paraphernalia, must be, to say the least, rather childish.

Nor do these puerilities appear simply in the dress worn by Odd-Fellows. They exhibit themselves in some of their forms and ceremonies. In what other light, for instance, can we regard their practice of pouring water upon the corner-stone, when laying it as the corner-stone of one of their own halls, or of a church,—of sprinkling water in the dedication of a hall, and of strewing wheat and flowers ? We shall have occasion, perhaps, to refer to these “solemn ceremonies,” as they are called in the Manual, in another connexion. We simply allude to them now with the view of inducing you to look at them, and ask yourselves whether such things are worthy of the attention and time of those who wish to be considered “in understanding men”—an attainment which the apostle expressly enjoins upon us ? Let us hear what he says in regard to himself : “ When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child ;

but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Think you, would he who thus expressed himself have been found engaging in such juvenilities? and if not, does it become you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, to form a connexion with a society in which such things are performed by their *Grand Masters*, and that, too, by the express authority of the society? Truly

Such doings are sublimely *grand*,
And worthy of a *Master's* hand!

Another evidence of the ridiculous juvenilities of the association, is the assumption by its members of high-sounding names. Were we to witness a company of little children, during play hours, going through certain antic performances, the one professing to personate a "Grand Worthy Patriarch," another a "Grand Sire," another a "High Priest," each dressed up with aprons, rosettes, and other emblems of his official dignity, the scene might greatly amuse us, (although we could not approbate some of the ceremonies of this Order, to which we shall presently refer, even in children;) but to find persons with the stature, and claiming the

understanding of *men*, thus equipped, and calling each other such names, is well calculated to excite the risibilities of any one ; and we can assure our friends of this Order that this effect is not unfrequently produced on the occasions of their public exhibitions. We speak from actual observation. Why, just look at it. Here is a number of persons meeting together : they say to each other, " You must be the Grand Master, and you the Grand Sire, and you the High Priest, and you the Right Worthy Grand Treasurer, and you the Right Worthy Grand Corresponding Secretary, and you the Right Worthy Grand Recording Secretary, and you the Right Worthy Grand Guardian, and you the Right Worthy Grand Chaplain, and I the Right Worthy Grand Patriarch," &c. Suppose such a scene were enacted for the first time before your eyes by a number of persons whom you had regarded as men of understanding ; would you not be disposed to think they had lost their senses ? Now we are not contemplating the assumption of these names in a moral point of view—in the light of those passages of Holy Scripture which require us to

be "clothed with humility," to "mind not high things," to "stand not in the place of great men;" but we are looking at it simply in the light of reason and common sense. We ask you to bring to these things which we have had under consideration the understandings of men, and inquire whether *men* can associate themselves with a society where such childish trivialities are exhibited, and where they constitute an essential part of the system, without compromising their dignity and self-respect. Men should speak and act like men, if they wish to be honoured and respected as men.

2. *We again object to this society, that it renders itself justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous.* It does so, because its operations are concealed under the veil of secrecy. We deem it scarcely necessary to prove to you that this is a secret association to all intents and purposes. Lest, however, any should think we are chargeable with a misrepresentation in so characterizing it, we shall adduce the proof.

In the second section of the eighth article of "The Digest of Laws," we have the fol-

lowing: "The Grand Guardian is required to guard the door of the Grand Lodge room, to prove every brother before he admits him, to prevent the admission of persons not duly qualified, and to permit no one to retire without the P. W." We might multiply, without number, quotations from the established books, for the purpose of showing that the utmost care is observed, by means of outside and inside sentinels, and pass-words, to keep out of the precincts of the lodge-room any but the initiated. Here we wish you to notice, that we refer not now to the promises and pledges given by those who are initiated into the different degrees of the lodges, that they will preserve the secrets of the Order, nor to the sacrifice of moral principle which is thereby involved. To this matter we shall afterwards call your attention. We ask you to take a view of this society simply as a secret society, excluding, with the utmost vigilance, from its meetings, any but those who are members of the Order. Is not this fact of itself sufficient to excite the suspicions of the virtuous? For an answer to this, we appeal, my friends, to your candour. Here we

see a vast society, embracing thousands of members, regularly organized, and holding their meetings in places where no eye can see them but the eye of God. Such, indeed, is the scrutiny exercised, that even brothers, bearing a card, cannot visit a lodge or encampment in another jurisdiction without undergoing the strictest examination. For proof of this, allow me to read to you what is said in the Manual, under the head of "The examination of Visiter."

"When a brother, holding a *visiting*, or final card, desires to visit a lodge or encampment in another jurisdiction, he will send his card to the N. G. or C. P., by the Guardian or Sentinel. The presiding officer will appoint a committee to examine the applicant, one of which committee must be in possession of the T. P. W. This committee will then proceed to the ante-room with the card, and there examine the applicant. First, they will obtain his signature, which they will compare with that on the margin of his card. Second, they will examine him in the initiatory grade. If correct in these, *then* the committee-man having the T. P. W. will ex-

amine him in that, according to the mode laid down, and in a low tone of voice, so as not to be overheard by those not in possession of the word. All being satisfactory, they will then hand him a *white apron*, the regalia of the initiatory grade. If he asks to wear a regalia of a higher grade, they will proceed to examine him in the degrees, whose regalia he claims a right to wear, up to the fifth degree, or that of a Past Grand. Having found the applicant correct, the chairman of the committee will then announce themselves, and enter. The committee and visiter will address the chairs properly, when the chairman will introduce in due form the visiter, who will be welcomed by the N. G., and conducted to a comfortable seat, in an honourable position, by the committee; after which his card will be returned to him."

Now, my dear hearers, try to look at this matter in a calm, unbiassed state of mind, and tell me, not whether such a society as this is a virtuous society, but whether it does not render itself justly liable to the suspicions of every virtuous, honourable man? Who are those who seek to cover their actions under

an impenetrable veil? Are they the virtuous and the honourable of the community? Whither will the wrong-doer resort? Will it not be to the shades of darkness? To this question there can be but one answer. You have only to go out into the street for illustrations of the truth of this remark. Who are those that paint their window-glasses, and obscure them by screens? Are they those who are regarded by the community as engaged in lawful and reputable callings? No! they are your retailers of ardent spirits. And why they? Is it not in accommodation to the desires and feelings of their customers? Is it not that the tippler and drunkard may take their glass in secret? And why are they thus anxious? Is it not because they are conscious of doing that which, if seen, would bring discredit upon them in the community in which they reside? We know of no other reason why the light should be so peculiarly offensive to them; and have we not a right to charge the same motives upon those who must not only have the light excluded, but the doors guarded by ever-watchful sentinels?

But perhaps I may be told, as I often have been told by Odd-Fellows, that families, and firms, and church-courts, and legislatures, and cabinets have their secrets, and why may not Odd-Fellows have theirs ? Let me direct your attention for a few moments to this objection. In answering it, we shall not advert, for the present, to the obligations assumed by persons in their initiation, an examination of which would show the essential difference between the secrecy in these cases and that which characterizes this society. We are now considering it as a secret society, irrespective of the obligations it imposes on its members ; and we are considering it in this light to establish our position, that it is so far such a society as renders itself justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous. Let me remark, then, in relation to this objection which is brought against our argument,

First, that even if it could be proved that other approved associations have acted on the same principle as the one we are condemning, it would not follow from this that our position is not correct. It will not prove that you are governed by a right principle

because I am governed by the same. Perhaps a careful inquiry would show that church courts and other associated bodies have acted upon this principle when they should not have done so; and when, by doing so, they also rendered themselves justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous.

Secondly, it is well known that when public bodies close their doors against the admission of others, it is universally regarded as an intimation that there is something wrong somewhere—either that a member of the body has been guilty of gross misconduct, or that some end is to be accomplished, in order to reach which, it is necessary to take advantage of the ignorance of others. There may be, perhaps, exceptions; but these exceptions are very far from being sufficiently numerous to affect the truthfulness of our general statement. Now, according to this fact, the correctness of which must be admitted, what are we to infer when we see a society of persons *always* sitting with closed doors, and using the strictest vigilance to prevent the admission of any others but members of the society? What are we to infer when we see

a band of men, night after night, “arranging,” according to the directions contained in the Manual, “their lodge-room, so as to make it and premises secure against eaves-droppers?” Are we not to infer either that there is always something wrong with some of the members, (an admission which certainly would not be very creditable to the character of the society, claiming to have for its object the reformation of the world;) or if this be not admitted, must we not infer that they wish to accomplish their ends by taking advantage of the ignorance of others? And is this honourable? Is it worthy of gentlemen, not to say Christians, to be forming associations to accomplish objects which they can only attain in this way? We say it is not; and we believe that every high-minded, honourable man, untrammelled by the influences to which a connexion with such a society must necessarily subject him, would promptly and instinctively re-echo the same sentiment. Let a man act upon this principle in private life—in his daily intercourse with his fellow-men—and you will very soon find in what light his conduct will be regarded by all honourable

men. In what light, then, should we regard an association of men acting upon the same principle?

Thirdly, those cases in which the principle of secrecy is observed, with the general approbation of the community, and by reference to which it is thought to justify the society of Odd-Fellows, are essentially different from the case before us. They are so for the simple reason that this principle does not constitute one of their essential features. It does not so enter into them as that their existence depends upon it. It is said that families, and merchants, and church-courts, and legislatures have their secrets. True; but are these secret associations? That is the question; and if we refer this question to the common sense of mankind, who can doubt what the decision would be?

Merchants have their marks upon their goods, which are known only to the members of the firm; but every one knows the nature and object of the secret—that it is nothing more than a means of ascertaining the cost of the goods—a matter which concerns no one, and which cannot be supposed to con-

cern any one but the merchant himself and those who may be in his employment.

In all families there are doubtless some things said and done, which no member of the family would think of bringing before the public. But who regards the family as a secret association? Where is the family that enjoins secrecy upon its members, or upon those whom it admits into membership? There are, perhaps, fathers and mothers before me, who have never once told their children not to reveal the transactions of the family. Is it customary to enjoin secrecy even upon servants, when brought into the household, and who have so many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the affairs of the family? And suppose such a thing were done; would not the suspicion of the servant be immediately excited that all was not right in that family? Is there, then, we ask, in view of these facts, any resemblance between this case and the one before us?

Church-courts, and legislatures too, have their secret sessions, but they are not *secret associations*. In all ordinary meetings, any one is permitted to enter and witness their

deliberations; no one, who desires it, is refused an admission. Secret sessions, it is true, are sometimes held, but always for a special object—this object being generally known. It is done, too, by the votes of the members constituting the body; and of the propriety and expediency of which, every member is permitted, at the time, to judge for himself. Let it be remarked, too, that these bodies are responsible to those by whose will they hold their stations for all their actions, while, as it regards the Order of Odd-Fellows, the very nature of the society excludes all idea of responsibility. No obligation is assumed by the members of church-courts, legislatures, &c., nor is there any other obligation felt, than the declared will of the body—a will regulated and controlled by the views which each member has as to what he owes to himself, his country, and his God.

Let me remark here, and I hope it will have your special consideration, that in the Odd-Fellows' Manual, the very first chapter treats of "The Origin and Uses of Secret Societies." Who, in reading this, thinks of

those associations which occasionally hold secret sessions? In order to present to you, if possible, in a still more striking and convincing light, the essential difference in this respect between this society and those associations to which we have before referred, let me call your attention to the fact, that not only are all persons not Odd-Fellows excluded from their meetings, but in addition to this, they have on certain occasions their secret sessions, from which even all Odd-Fellows are excluded who do not belong to the particular lodge sitting at the time. The 10th section of article 13th of the "Digest of Laws," reads thus: "Any brother, a member of a Grand Lodge, and in possession of the R. P. degree, if recommended by the representative of the State from which he hails, may be admitted to witness the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of the United States, *except when the Grand Lodge is in secret session.*" Here, then, you have a *double secrecy*, showing that it is different in its character from all ordinary societies in this respect.

Having thus, we think, fully shown that the

cases referred to form no parallel whatever, we recur to our position, that this society renders itself, by this principle of secrecy, which confessedly enters into its very organization, justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous. Here is a combination of individuals, embracing thousands of members, and all controlled by one head, holding their meetings in the community under an impenetrable veil. Such a society, we say again, deserves, from this very fact, the reprobation of those who are governed by high-minded, honourable principles.

If the replies which Odd-Fellows are accustomed to make to this objection possess any weight whatever, they prove that a resort to the darkness of secrecy is not presumptive of wrong-doing under any circumstances. But is not this contrary to the common sense of mankind; and does it not stand forth in direct antagonism to the Scriptures of truth? Open your Bible, my hearer—that Bible for which the Odd-Fellow professes so much regard—and what do you there find? You find such passages as these: “Wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord,

and *their works are in the dark*; and they say, Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?" Listen to these emphatic words of the Saviour: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; for every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; and he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Hear further this solemn command, as it proceeds from the throne of the great Lawgiver himself: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Look to the apostle of the Gentiles, and you will see how he illustrated in his conduct these divine principles. He could say, "We have renounced the *hidden* things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by *manifestation of the truth*, commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." And again: "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that

in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we had our conversation in the world." For a still brighter exhibition of the same trait of character, look to the Saviour himself. He could say, in the presence of his bitterest enemies, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing." Could he have given this testimony had he acted upon the principles of this society? Think of these things, my hearers; look at these passages of scripture, and especially at the example of our blessed Master, and then tell me, do they give any countenance to this principle of secrecy which characterizes Odd-Fellowship? Rather, let me ask, do they not show that Christianity stamps upon it the seal of its reprobation? And yet there are those who will pretend to find in the Bible a sanction for this essential feature of the Order. In the name of the Bible, and in the name of Christianity, we here enter our solemn protest against all this. No one, acquainted with the history of paganism, can be a stranger to the

fact that such associations have ever been identified with it. Who of you have not heard of the Eleusinian and Samothracian mysteries of Greece and Rome? What else were these, to which we find so many references in the classic page, but secret associations? He who doubts, can consult for himself the Encyclopædia Americana, where he will find "Mysteries," as existing among the Greeks, and afterwards also among the Romans, expressly defined to be "secret religious assemblies, which no uninitiated person was permitted to approach." The writer of this article, after giving us this definition of mysteries, remarks that "they were designed to interpret those mythological fables and religious rites, the true meaning of which it was thought expedient to conceal from the people." Such is the origin of secret associations. They were born in pagan lands; and there, too, by the same spirit which gave them birth, they are still fostered. In confirmation of this statement, we need only refer you to the Thugs, those secret, death-dealing assassins of India, whose bloody deeds are all committed in the name of religion, and

under the patronage of their appropriate deity. No! as a Christian, we disclaim the principle of secrecy as having any place in the religion of Jesus. You may find it among professing Christians, but you will not find it in Christianity. There is nothing which she so much dreads as darkness. Under her auspices the shades of gloom are dissipated. In proportion as she exerts her influence, the command is obeyed, "Arise! shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Her Author is the Father of lights, "in whom is no darkness." He whose name she bears is "the Sun of righteousness"—"the light that lighteth every man." Her children are "the children of light." The call which she hath addressed to them, is a call "from darkness into God's marvellous light." The "path" in which she leads them on to glory, is "as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The panoply in which she has arrayed them, is the "armour of light." And the glorious inheritance to which she will at last bring them, is "the inheritance of the saints in light." How can we then as-

sociate the darkness of secrecy with the religion of the Bible—that blessed book, to which we are to look for Christianity in its purity, and which is declared to be a “light shining in a dark place?” Secrecy it knows not. Its divine principles are spread out for the view of all. Oh, then, obscure not the glory and dim not the lustre of that religion which is pouring forth its truths and its consolations to bless and sanctify the world, by identifying it with the spirit of darkness that reigns in the lodge-room !

LECTURE II.

In my last lecture on the subject of Odd-Fellowship, my remarks were directed to two points. In the first place, we endeavoured to show you that it is such a society as justly exposes itself to the contempt and ridicule of the wise and manly. The truth of this proposition we endeavoured to establish by reference to its *name*, its *ceremonies*, and *public exhibitions*, and the *high-sounding titles* assumed by its members. In the second place, we endeavoured to establish the proposition that it renders itself justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous. In confirmation of this, we referred to the feature of *secrecy*, which essentially belongs to it, and which characterizes its operations. In the discussion of this part of the subject, we considered at some length the objection that other associations have their secrets as well as the society of Odd-Fellows.

We have thus far taken an outside view of

the Order. We now propose to enter the Temple, as it is called, and examine whether it possesses such characteristics as should commend it to the regards of the Christian community. You will recollect that we have thus far proved every assertion which we have made, in relation to this Order, by the most unquestionable authority. By the same kind of authority we now propose to test its character in other points of view. We think, therefore, that we have a right to request your attention to what we have to say.

In taking a survey of the operations of this mystic Order, in so far as it has been pleased, by the publication of books, to lift the veil, let us direct our attention to the rules whieh govern the society in the admission of members. In order, however, that we may introduce them to your notice in due form, and that our position in relation to them may be clearly and fully understood, we assert that they are of such a character as to afford ground for another objection—an objection which, although not in itself possessing the importance of some others, is in our opinion worthy the serious consideration of those who

are honestly desirous of knowing whether the Order has any just claims upon their regards and co-operation. The objection is this:

3. *The candidate, in the very act of making an application for admission, subjects himself to a risk which no man, who regards his reputation and his interests, should be willing to incur.* We here take it for granted that Odd-Fellows are no better than other people—that they are possessed of that depravity which characterizes human nature in its present fallen state; in other words, that they are of “like passions” with others. Surely more than this will not be claimed for them by their friends. In this assumption we are not making them worse than their neighbours. Let us, then, look at the regulations which control this society in the admission of its members. Here we shall read Section 3d of Article 2d of the Constitution of the Lafayette Lodge, No. 18, of the I. O. of O. F., of the State of Pennsylvania. It is as follows:

“Section 3d. A candidate for initiation into the mysteries of the Order, shall be proposed in writing by a member of this Lodge

in good standing, setting forth the name, age, profession, and residence of the candidate, which shall be entered on record, and referred to a committee of three, whose duty it shall be to inquire and report at the next stated meeting of the Lodge, as to the character and fitness of the candidate for initiation and membership. If the report be favourable, the candidate shall be ballotted for. If it shall appear that the balls are all white, or only one black ball, the candidate shall be declared elected. If there shall appear two or more black balls, the candidate shall be declared rejected."

Here, my friends, you will perceive that when the name of an individual is proposed, a committee of three is appointed, whose duty it is to inquire and report at the next meeting of the Lodge as to the character and fitness of the candidate for initiation and membership. That the committee make it their business to get all the information which is attainable in reference to the candidate, we are bound to presume from the very nature and object of their appointment; and we have at hand pretty conclusive evidence that they are

generally by no means remiss in seeking the requisite information. The author of the Manual, on page 89, after advising the candidate under examination to "answer every question, placed properly before him, truthfully and honestly," presents the following significant consideration why this advice should be regarded: "Evasion or concealment will probably be of no avail, for the information required has in all probability been obtained from other sources." Here, you will perceive, he has to undergo a strict examination when he makes his appearance for initiation, after he has been elected; and the information sought by this examination, we are informed by the author of the Manual, "has in all probability been obtained from other sources." It is plain, therefore, that the committee of inquiry, as a general thing, does its work pretty thoroughly.

Now let me ask you, my friends, whether such a system of espionage as this is worthy the countenance and support of the community? Perhaps it may be said that the individual is a candidate for membership, and it is but right that those who are to be associa-

ted with him should be informed upon matters which it may be deemed of importance for them to know. We do not deny that the system is necessary to the existence of a secret society; but we ask whether a society, whose existence renders such a system necessary, should receive the patronage and co-operation of honourable men, and be regarded with favour by the community in which it operates? Ought a man to place himself in a situation in which he will give occasion for the appointment of such a committee as this? a committee who will make it their business to inquire about him—who knows what? and apply for information—who knows where? Why, just bring the matter home, my friends, to yourselves. Suppose you knew there were three or more persons in the community, who were going round among your neighbours, with the view of getting all the information attainable in reference to you—asking them, for instance, whether you could keep a secret; whether you were sound in mind and body; whether you would be likely to “give yourselves passively to your guides, to lead you whithersoever they will,” &c., &c.—would

you not be likely to remind them of what Paul says about “busybodies in other men’s matters?” Here, however, is a society, claiming to be pre-eminently an honourable society, which appoints a committee to do this very thing. We should make no objection to any investigation which they might think proper to make in the presence of the candidate, and for which they could be held responsible; but we do most decidedly object to the establishment in the community of such a secret, inquisitorial court, in reference to any of the members of that community. Why, under the operation of such a system as this, a man’s character may be defamed, and that, too, without any opportunity being afforded him of defending it. Those who may be his enemies are here favoured with facilities for inflicting, it may be, a lasting injury upon their unsuspecting victim, while they themselves remain concealed behind an impenetrable veil of secrecy. And how few are there who have not enemies! We know who has said, “I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

We may be told that no improper questions

will be asked. Let us *have* the questions, gentlemen. If they are expressly prescribed by the Lodge, you can surely give them: if they are not, but are such questions as any member of the committee may think worth while to put to those from whom he can expect to derive information, who knows what they are, and therefore who can say whether they are proper or improper? Let me here remind you of the wise man's declaration: "The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds."

We may now proceed a little farther. We may suppose that the candidate has been favourably regarded by the committee, and reported accordingly. The next thing is to ballot for his election. This is done by means of white and black balls—colours emblematical, we suppose, the white of the members of the Order, and the black of all outsiders, and consequently of those who are deemed unworthy of admission into their sanctuary. We have, of course, never witnessed the scene; yet from the evidence presented in the books, we presume that each member has in his possession, at the time of voting, one white and one black ball, either of which he

can cast into the receptacle. According to the section of the Constitution which we have read in your hearing, "if there shall appear two or more black balls, the candidate shall be declared rejected." Here you will perceive that two individuals* have it in their power to keep out of this most benevolent society, as it is called, a person, contrary to the declared will of all the other members. Now we submit it to your understandings, whether such an opportunity should be afforded to two individuals to inflict upon any person such a stab in the dark? We say, *in the dark*, for "remember," says the author of the Manual, "that the secrecy of the ballot must be maintained in its purity. Resist every attempt to lessen or impair its security—above all, to abolish it." Look at this matter, my hearers. Would you advise a friend of yours to

* A brother who wishes to propose another as a member of an Encampment, must do so in writing. The candidate must be received and admitted in a manner similar to that by which a person is admitted to a subordinate Lodge: *one black ball*, however, is sufficient to reject him. The fee for admission is seldom or never less than twelve dollars, for which the three Encampment degrees are conferred.—*Odd-Fellows' Text Book*, page 102.

place himself in such a situation as this? We all know what poor human nature is; and we presume that persons, in becoming Odd-Fellows, do not become so *odd* as to lay this aside. We know, too, how ready persons are to embrace opportunities of gratifying a spiteful and revengeful spirit, especially where the individual is destitute of the grace of God. And can we conceive of a more favourable opportunity than this being afforded? We have only to suppose that there are but two persons belonging to a lodge who have a grudge against the candidate, and he is declared unfit for membership, and consequently unfit to enjoy the glorious privileges and blessings which it is said to confer.

But perhaps it may be said, He is no worse off than he was before he made the application. Indeed! So, then, it is no disgrace to be rejected by a society of Odd-Fellows? Will this be admitted? But suppose it is no disgrace in reality, does the rejected person not feel it to be such? Can he hold up his head in the community as he once did, when he knows that in that community there are, it may be, hundreds of persons who know that

he has been *black-balled*, and thereby declared unfit to be a member of a society whence none are, by the Constitution, excluded, but atheists and persons of immoral character?*

4. *We object to this society that there is, in the pledge given, the abuse of the ordinance of the oath.* In order to establish this position, it will be necessary for us to show that this pledge involves in it an oath. This, it would seem, is denied by some of its friends. The Manual, for instance, from which we have previously quoted, expressly says, “Our obligations are not oaths; no jurist would call them such, but simply solemn pledges, wherein our yea is yea and amen.” (Page 55.) Here is the denial, and it is perfectly right that the members of the Order should have the benefit of it, for we wish not to misrepresent the society in the least iota.

Now, let it be remarked here that we do not affirm that the pledge given is an oath,

* It is usual, when a candidate is rejected, to send notice thereof to all the Lodges in the same and adjoining counties in and near which the rejection occurred. No rejected person can be lawfully ballotted for in any Lodge under six months from the time of his rejection.—*Odd-Fellows' Text Book*, page 52.

in the ordinary sense of that term—that it is given according to the forms usually observed in civil society; and if the denial, which we have just read, was designed simply to cover this ground, we have no disposition to question its truthfulness. Indeed, we are not disposed to question the testimony here given, in so far as that testimony bears upon *facts*. But when a man tells me that he has not taken an oath, before I can assent to his statement I must know what he understands by an oath. He may have views altogether different from mine, as to what it is that is necessary to constitute an oath. The form of an oath may be mistaken for the oath itself, or the nature of those obligations which it implies. But the form of any ordinance must be distinguished from the matter of it; and it will be so distinguished by every person who has right views in relation to it. Various forms of swearing have been in use. But this variety of forms has not been supposed to change its intrinsic nature.

The question, then, is, What is an oath? What is that which constitutes its being? In answering this question, we shall refer you to

two authorities of a high character. In the first place, we shall give you the definition of Webster, as we find it in the quarto edition of his elaborate work. "An oath," says this learned lexicographer, "is a solemn affirmation, or declaration, made with an appeal to God for the truth of what is affirmed." Here is the definition. In the next place, he says, "The appeal to God in an oath, implies that the person imprecates his vengeance, and renounces his favour, if the declaration is false; or if the declaration is a promise, the person invokes the vengeance of God if he should fail to fulfil it. A false oath is perjury." Here we have the definition, and the whole of it. Nothing has been suppressed by us. In this definition, you will observe, he makes the very essence of an oath to consist in the appeal to God. He does not say that the imprecation of vengeance must be expressed, in order to constitute an oath. This imprecation, he says, is *implied* in the appeal. And in this he is evidently correct. The appeal to God would lose its sanction without a belief of his power to punish, and the certainty of that punishment in case of guilt.

The other authority to which I shall refer you, is that of the Westminster Confession of Faith. In chapter xxii. it thus defines a "lawful oath;" that is, an oath for confirmation, as distinguished from profane oaths: "A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth or promiseth, and judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth." These definitions are substantially the same.

Now, you will observe, according to both these definitions, an oath is a "solemn appeal to God." In this consists its very essence.

Having, then, ascertained the nature of an oath, the next thing for us to do, if we would establish the charge we have brought against the Order, of abusing this ordinance, is to show that it is, according to these definitions, an oath-bound society. Let us, then, open our well-authenticated Manual. On page 306, in speaking of the degree called "the Grand Encampment Degree," the author says, "The receiver of this degree appeals to Heaven and earth to witness the fidelity with

which he will represent the interests of his subordinate, and at the same time faithfully preserve the secrets, advance the interests, and promote the welfare of his Grand Encampment. May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob aid him, and keep him true and pure, as a fellow-patriarch, with those who have preceded him into the true rest." Here we have it expressly asserted that there is an "appeal to Heaven." Have we not, then, here an oath? We might refer to other statements of a similar character, to be found in the book; but one such statement is as good as a thousand. If, therefore, we are to believe the author, and attach any credit to those gentlemen who have declared this book to be "full and accurate in its details," and its "instructions" such as may be "confidently relied upon as correct," then we say there is, in the obligations assumed, at least by the members of this degree, an "appeal to Heaven," and of course, to the God of heaven, to witness the truth of their declaration. And if, according to our authorities, an oath is "a solemn appeal to God," then we have here an oath, whether jurists would so regard it or not;

and in this society we have an oath-bound confederacy.

Having then, my friends, established this by authority which cannot but be admitted, the question here presents itself for consideration : Ought not this feature of the society to be a ground of objection to it in the view of professing Christians ? Solomon mentions it, as characteristic of a good man, that he “feareth an oath;”—not that he is unwilling to take an oath, when he has a clear call to do so ; but he cherishes in his heart such reverence for it, that he will not engage in it without a clear conviction of its lawfulness and necessity under the circumstances. Now may we not reasonably suppose that a person, having in his heart this holy reverence for an oath, would, before connecting himself with a society in which he would be called to appeal to Heaven, make this matter a subject of serious and prayerful consideration ? Would he not be likely to ask himself such questions as the following :

(1.) *Are its transactions of such importance as to justify an “appeal to Heaven,” directly or indirectly made ? This will surely be a*

subject of inquiry, on the part of every Presbyterian, for his Confession expressly declares that an oath "is warranted in matters of weight and moment," plainly implying that when such matters do not exist, there is no warrant for an oath.

The Confession further declares that "whosoever taketh an oath, ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act." Is this done by persons in connecting themselves with the society of Odd-fellows? No; it is not done; and from the very circumstances in which they are placed, it is utterly impossible that it could be done; for, until they assume the obligation, they know nothing of those things to which they bind themselves. For what purpose is this appeal to Heaven made? It is, according to the Manual, to "witness the fidelity" with which he who makes it will "preserve the secrets" of his degree. And why is Heaven called to witness his fidelity? Is it not to inspire his associates with confidence? And does not this imply that such confidence is necessary before a knowledge of these secrets is communicated? Ignorant, then, as he must be of these

secrets, until he makes the appeal, he cannot act upon the principle laid down in the Confession. He cannot *know* that these secrets are "matters of weight and moment," and therefore cannot satisfy himself, according to the Confession, that he has a "warrant" for making the appeal. It is therefore utterly impossible for him to comply with the requisition of the Confession, "duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act." Again, the Confession says: "Neither may any man bind himself by an oath, to any thing but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be." According to this principle, not only is it necessary that the thing to which he binds himself *be* good and just, but he must *believe* it so to be. This belief implies knowledge; and this knowledge he cannot, from the circumstances of the case, be supposed to possess. He cannot swear, "in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness." But suppose that no difficulty presents itself here, will not a person duly impressed with a sense of the solemnity of an appeal to Heaven, be likely to inquire:

(2.) *By what authority am I required to*

make this solemn appeal? The Confession to which we have referred you, declares, that a lawful oath must be “imposed by lawful authority;” and this principle has always been enforced by writers on this subject. There must be, in order to justify an oath on my part, not only “a matter of weight and moment,” but a party having the authority to impose it upon me. Now, let me ask, what right has this society to require its members, or those who propose to become its members, to make this solemn appeal to Heaven? We repeat the question, what right have they to require it? Whence did they derive their authority? We know that ecclesiastical and civil powers have been invested by God with this authority; but we have yet to see it proved that any others, either as individuals or as an association, are clothed with any such authority. Think you, my hearers, that he who has instituted the oath as an ordinance for the welfare of society, has made it lawful for any two, or three, or a hundred persons, who may form themselves into a society, especially into a secret society, to “impose” on each other an appeal to Him, as a witness

of their fidelity? No; we cannot believe it. Let this principle be acted upon, and soon, very soon, will such appeals become common in our daily intercourse; and when this state of things shall have been brought about, the oath will have lost the sacredness of its character, and the awe-inspiring solemnity with which it is now associated. The sentiments here advanced, are expressed in a forcible and conclusive manner in the following extract from a work, entitled, "The Oath a Divine Ordinance, and an Element of the Social Constitution," by Rev. D. X. Junkin:

"The right to demand an oath of an individual presupposes a right to place him *sub pæna*—to call him to testify or promise under penalty—and this involves an exercise of supreme authority. No higher authority can be exercised upon earth, than that which summons the individual into the presence of his God, and calls him to perform any social duty under oath. Two sovereignties of the same kind ought not to co-exist: an *imperium in imperio* is always dangerous. And if voluntary societies may demand an oath in one case, they may do it in another; and thus,

exercising the highest prerogatives of government, their authority may come in conflict with "the powers that be." The Church of Christ has a right to require her own members to swear in courts ecclesiastical—the commonwealth has a right to require the citizen to swear in courts civil; but if this right be extended to other societies at all, the authority of the church or of the state may be impaired, and the rights of the individual infringed. I owe no allegiance to any societies except those under whose authority my God has placed me; nor have I a right to transfer the allegiance which I owe to them to any voluntary association of men: and if I yield to such association the right of tendering to me an oath, I permit it to usurp a prerogative of the state. This usurpation becomes peculiarly dangerous, when the society employing the oath is secret, and employs it to bind its members under an allegiance to the society, which may be incompatible with allegiance to the commonwealth. We deem it, therefore, an abuse of the oath, to employ it in any such way." Pp. 190, 191.

There are those of you who may regard

this as a very small matter. But tell me not that an *appeal to HEAVEN* is a very small matter. The Son of God has said, "He that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon;" and may we not say that he who appeals to Heaven, appeals "to the throne of God, and to him that sitteth thereon?" And, tell me, is it a small matter to summon, as a witness, this great, and mighty, and terrible God, who made the worlds, who looketh on the earth and it trembleth, who toucheth the hills and they smoke? Oh, no! A more solemn act cannot well be conceived, than that of invoking the inspection, and imprecating the vengeance of that God, from whom there is no concealment, and into whose hands it is indeed a fearful thing to fall. Let him who makes the appeal, remember that this God he must meet in judgment; that the transactions of this society, which he thus binds himself to conceal from the eye of man, will be brought forth into the light of that day, whose effulgent blaze will bring forth to the view of assembled worlds the hidden things of darkness.

5. *We object to this society, because a connexion with it is insnaring to the conscience.* In the discussion of this part of our subject, we shall consider it without reference to the abuse of the ordinance of the oath to which we have just directed your attention. When a man binds himself by promise, even where there is no oath, he surely ought to have a clear view of the nature of those obligations which he assumes. He surely ought to satisfy himself that the thing to which he binds himself will not involve in it any violation of the law of God. This should be done by him before he comes under the obligation; for after the obligation is assumed, or rather, let me say, after the promise is given, he may, through a mistaken conscience, suppose himself bound to its performance, though otherwise he might consider it unlawful. We have seen persons professing to have such a regard for their word, that they would adhere to it, notwithstanding they subsequently regretted having given it, and notwithstanding their conviction that it was wrong for them to give it. We have often met with such persons, and have found them, in defence of their po-

sition, quoting the words of the Psalmist, in the 15th Psalm, in which he speaks of the good man as one "who sweareth to his hurt, and changeth not," forgetting that the psalmist is there speaking of that which is prejudicial to his private interests, without reference to the moral character of the obligation. Instances of such cases each of you doubtless can recall to his own mind. There are multitudes who have very imperfect views of the nature of the divine law, and whose consciences are so weak as to stumble at things which would present no difficulty in the way of a man who has his "senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Now we say, (leaving out of view altogether the irreverence which there is in making an appeal to Heaven at such a time, and under such circumstances,) that a connexion with this society is necessarily insnaring to the conscience. It is so, apart from the real character of the transactions enacted within the lodge, and simply from the fact that no man knows what may be expected of him as a member of this society. There are secrets of which he is necessarily ignorant until he

assumes the obligation to keep them. Let me again refer you to that solemn appeal which the receiver of the fifth Degree of the Grand Encampment makes, "that he will faithfully preserve the secrets of his Grand Encampment." This is express and conclusive upon the point. But we have other testimony: On page 101, the author of the Manual counsels Odd-fellows to "keep their secrets," that is, the secrets of the Order, "more faithfully than their own." Again, in speaking of the emblems of the fifth, or Scarlet Degree, the author says, on page 160, "This is why we expect him to understand and preserve inviolate our mysteries, and to observe that brethren do the same." On page 91, the same author gives the following direction to persons, in relation to their initiation: "Give yourself passively to your guides, to lead you whithersoever they will." Mark these words. The fact of secrecy being imposed, is further evident from the frequent references, contained in the Manual, to what is called "the unwritten work" of the Order. On page 279, in speaking of the "introduction" of the candidate to the "Golden Rule Degree," the fol-

lowing direction is given: "The candidate for this degree should be firm and decided in his answers to all questions asked him, and patient in all required of him, that he may the better understand its instructions, as they are successively unfolded." But why need we multiply quotations: it seems like an attempt to prove what every body knows to be true. Will any one pretend to deny that a promise of secrecy is exacted, before the mysteries of the Order are revealed to the candidate? We challenge such a denial. No society could be a secret society, or at any rate, long continue to be such, if this were the case. A promise of secrecy, under such circumstances, would be altogether useless; and to talk of "mysteries," in such a society, (an expression frequently occurring in the writings of Odd-fellows,) would be to talk nonsense; and the strict vigilance with which the doors are guarded, would be the most absurd farce imaginable. Indeed, so essential is this feature of the institution to its very constitution, and such is the care with which it is guarded, that each degree has its own mysteries; so that there can be no possibility

of any individual rising to a higher degree than the one to which he at present belongs, except at the price of the strictest fidelity to the vow of secrecy under which he had previously brought himself.

We ask you, then, my dear friends, to look at the society in this respect. Leaving out of view altogether the fact, on which we have before dwelt, that such vows of secrecy justly expose the Order to the suspicions of the virtuous, how, let me ask you, can any man, with an enlightened and tender conscience, come under such obligations as those of which we are speaking? Is it right for a person to connect himself with an organized body, as one of its constituent members, ignorant as he must necessarily be, before this act of connexion, of those very mysteries which give to it its distinctive character, and not only so, but come under a solemn vow to preserve these mysteries inviolate? We say he cannot. Such an act is unworthy a rational, intelligent being, and is, in our apprehension, inconsistent with any proper sense of the law of Jehovah, as imposing upon him paramount obligations.

Perhaps it may be said that the secrets which the members of this society are required to keep, are of such a nature, that the keeping of them will involve no violation of the law of God. It is not, however, the *keeping* of them, of which we are now speaking, but the *promise* under which the individual brings himself, before he knows what they are. We affirm that a promise of this kind given to any public body, under such circumstances, is wrong. He promises to that of which he is ignorant, and therefore, for the time being at least, lays aside his reason and his conscience, and, let me add too, the law of the great God. He takes a step in the dark. He "gives himself passively" (according to the express language of the Manual) "to his guides, to lead him whithersoever they will."

Perhaps it may be said that, in assuming these obligations, he has the testimony of others that there is nothing wrong in the principles of the Order—"principles which," says the Grand Master, in his address to his brethren, in laying of a corner-stone, "it is our covenanted duty to promulgate and es-

tablish." He has the testimony of others ! And who are these others ? Are they not Odd-Fellows ? Do they not constitute the society ? And is it to be supposed that any society would testify against itself ? Such a supposition involves an absurdity. How much reliance, think you, ought to be placed on the testimony of the Jesuits, as to the character of their Secret Order ? Would they not all tell you that it is a society worthy the prayers and the patronage of every Christian, and of every friend to humanity ? Must we believe them ? Why not, if we are to take the testimony of Odd-Fellows, as to the character of their society ? We deny that they are competent witnesses in the case. Nay, we deny that the testimony of any man, or of any association of men, should be taken in a case of this kind. The testimony given is not in relation to *facts* :—these facts constitute the "mysteries" which are "preserved inviolate;"—but it is testimony in relation to the moral character of these mysteries. It is given in answer to the question, whether they are of such a character as that the keeping of them would be consistent with our obliga-

tions to the divine law? And to what does this amount? Why, it amounts simply to an expression of the views of certain persons who may be Jews, Mohammedans, or Christians, as we shall hereafter show you, as to what is right; or, in other words, it is merely their sentiments as to the requisitions of the divine law. And who constituted such persons judges for me in such matters? We have said that, according to the principles of the society, they may be Jews, Christians, or Mohammedans, or a mixture of all three. But we care not who they are; they have no right to direct my conscience, or to come between the great God, the Judge of all, and my soul. No; as a Protestant, I will not yield such a right, even to the Church of God. I may be told to "give myself passively to my guides, to lead me whithersoever they will," just as the Church of Rome tells her deluded votaries; I may be told "to be patient in all that is required of me," just as the Pope tells his vassals; but as a responsible, intelligent, and moral agent, I am bound to say to them, as the Reformers, the friends of liberty, have ever said to such assumptions

on the part of Rome, God alone is the Lord of my conscience, and the Bible is the only supreme standard of my morals, as well as of my faith. Let me have the facts—give me the mysteries of your Order—and then, after I have tried them by this standard, I will tell you whether they are such as to receive my support and co-operation. I may, indeed, respect the opinions of the wise and good, but I am not to make their opinions the rule of my conduct, in entering into a solemn vow and covenant to promulgate and establish principles, until I know what they are. I have said that I may respect the opinions of the wise and good. How far the opinions of Odd-Fellows, as a society, demand my respect and yours, on this ground, is known to you, as well as your speaker.

Will it be said that the individual may dissolve his connexion with the society when he discovers that its principles are inconsistent with the divine law? Yes, and so you may leave the Church of Rome, or the Society of Loyola, after having connected yourself with it; but would this liberty which you may have justify such a connexion, even though you

should thereby become better acquainted with the spirit of these fraternities? Is it, however, likely that this liberty will be excercised by an Odd-Fellow after his connexion with the society? No; there are always influences operating upon persons thus associated, and considerations to which such an association gives rise, which in their nature are likely to prevent them from retracing the steps which they had taken. The attractions to which the very idea of secrecy and mystery gives rise, and which were in the first instance strong enough to allure him into the Order, will be likely to prevent his departure from it. The same power of fascination which addresses itself to his curiosity—that powerful principle of our nature—and under the influence of which he was induced to take the first step on the mystic ladder, will be likely to operate with increasing power upon his heart, in inducing him to ascend, that he may obtain a full view of those enchanting regions which his imagination has already invested with so many powerful attractions, and in order to get a glimpse of which he was induced to take the first step in the ascending, or, rather let

me say, the descending scale.* And is there not, in the very nature of the case, ground to suppose that the influence of those who are in the higher degrees, while it will be exerted to advance the faithful and trustworthy, will at the same time be used to prevent any farther initiation or development of the mysteries on the part of those who may indicate dissatisfaction, and of whom they have reason to be suspicious?

Moreover, the consequences which would flow from a dissolution of his connexion with the Order, would necessarily be such that very few persons would have a sufficient degree of moral courage to encounter them. In the first place, the very act of severance would be a declaration that he did wrong in joining the society. Few men like to make such a declaration, however conscious they may be

* The patriarchal branch of the Order is, in the estimation of some, far more desirable than the initiatory branch. Every Odd-Fellow should make it his aim to reach the "topmost round of the ladder of Odd-Fellowship," the Royal-Purple Degree. No brother of good character, however poor he may be, or however humble, need be prevented from attaining thus to the full stature of an Odd-Fellow.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book*, pages 103-4.

of the fact. In the second place, as we before intimated, the promise he had given, and for his sincerity in giving which he had called Heaven and earth to witness, would be likely to darken and enslave his conscience. In the third place, he would have to tear himself away from associates to whom he had been bound by covenant ties, some of whom had, perhaps, greatly befriended him; and not only would he have to dissolve the connexion between himself and them, but he would expose himself to their reproach and opposition; and this society, being a secret and powerful organization, extending throughout the land, and ramified into all the departments of society, its opposition is by no means to be treated with contempt. It is, indeed, a formidable thing to encounter it. In the fourth place, he would lose any benefit which might accrue to him from the expense to which he has already been subjected; and we all know with what power such a motive as this is likely to operate on the heart of a poor man, who may have been induced from pecuniary considerations to connect himself with the society. Perhaps he is depending for the present upon

the favour of some Odd-Fellow for his work. Surely, then, it is useless to talk of men leaving a society, if they do not like it, where there are such influences in operation to bias the moral judgment and control the will.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that this objection (viz., that a connexion with this Order is insnaring to the conscience) will receive your serious and dispassionate consideration. My object has been to maintain the authority and supremacy of conscience :

“The conscience, that sole monarchy in man,
Owing allegiance to no earthly prince,
Made by the edict of creation free ;
Made sacred, made above all human laws ;
Holding of Heaven alone ; of most divine
And indefeasible authority ;
An individual authority that none
Created might, unpunished, hind or touch ;
Unbound, save by the eternal laws of God,
And unamenable to all below.”

This vicegerent which God has placed in the soul, when enlightened by the word of God, it is our solemn duty to obey. We would have you avoid this and all kindred secret associations, because we believe a con-

nexion with them involves in it, to say the least, a great risk—the risk of subjecting the moral sense to the impulsions of the lower principles of our nature—the risk of bringing down conscience from its judgment-seat in the soul, and placing there some of the other powers which are continually struggling for the mastery. You who have read Wayland's Moral Science will not have forgotten the considerations by which he establishes the right of conscience, under divine direction, to govern the whole man—how he claims for it, in relation to the other powers of the soul, an office similar to that of the balance-wheel in the watch, which regulates and controls the whole machinery. Touch that, and its effect is seen in every part. Surely, then, it becomes you to beware of any act in which, even for a moment, the authority of conscience becomes impaired, or the exercise of its office suspended. By such an act you throw yourself from under the moral government of Jehovah, and, for the time at least, your character as a moral agent sinks into that of a mere creature of circumstances, uncontrolled by this high governing principle. If the

promises and pledges, and solemn appeals to Heaven, to preserve the secrets of the Order, which the Odd-Fellow makes, will only *endanger* the integrity of his moral nature, (and who of the uninitiated, at least, can say that it will not do this?) as a professing Christian he is surely bound to guard against every such liability. If we take a step in the dark, under the impelling force of self-interest or curiosity, our whole moral frame may receive a shock from which it will never recover. This one step may lead to another and another until we have passed beyond the reach of those restraining influences by which we are now surrounded.

Let conscience therefore, my friends, have, under God, the throne; and remember that it is only IN THE LIGHT that she can discharge her high office. Exclude this, and her energies are paralyzed—her voice is hushed.

LECTURE III.

WE proceed, my hearers, to submit to your candid and dispassionate consideration, this evening, other objections to the Order of Odd-Fellows. These objections, like those we have previously mentioned, have been impressed upon our mind by an examination of the official publications of the Order. In presenting to you these objections, we may have occasion to recur to quotations which we have already made from the authorities in our possession. This becomes necessary from the fact that these quotations involve principles which are objectionable in more points than one.

6. We object to this society, that a connexion with it is inconsistent with that feeling of individual responsibility and independence which it is our right and our duty at all times to cherish. This society is called the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows. In one point

of view, as we shall afterwards see, it richly deserves the name. But as for that independence which properly belongs to man, and which American citizens especially have claimed for themselves, and which is necessarily involved in the idea of individual responsibility, we shall find, on an examination of the principles of this society, that it allows the exercise of it to a very limited degree.

We might here enter into a particular examination of its form of government, from which it would appear, from several considerations, that it is of an exceedingly arbitrary character. Such an investigation of this, however, as would be necessary to do full justice to the subject, and to give you any thing like an adequate view of the workings of the system, would require more time than we can well afford in this discussion, and divert our attention from such matters as, in our opinion, have stronger claims upon our consideration as Christians. We may, however, express it as our opinion, that it is hardly possible to conceive of any organization possessing more power than that which by constitutional law belongs to its supreme

head, the Grand Lodge of the United States. By the very first article of its constitution, it is declared to "possess original and exclusive jurisdiction in Odd-Fellowship over the territories comprising the Federal Government of the United States." It is also declared to be "the source of all true and legitimate authority, in Odd-Fellowship, in the United States of America. All State, District, and Territorial Grand Lodges and Encampments, assemble under its warrant, and derive their authority from it." Here you will perceive that its jurisdiction is not only exclusive, but original; that its authority is undervived from any other source, but that it is itself "the source of all true and legitimate authority." How undemocratic and anti-republican this is, I need not tell those of you who have any acquaintance with these matters. You know that it is a fundamental principle of democracy and republicanism, that, in the language of Judge Story, "all power emanates from the people." (See Story on the Constitution, chap. viii. sec. 59.) Here the principles of Odd-Fellowship and republicanism are presented as antagonistic. We are further

told, in the same article of the constitution, that "To it," viz., the Grand Lodge of the United States, "belongs the power to regulate and control the work of the Order, and the several degrees belonging thereto, and to fix and determine the customs and usages in regard to all things which concern Odd-Fellowship." Let it be remarked, too, that this body, whose power is thus original, exclusive, and extensive, is not composed of representatives from "Subordinate Lodges," but of representatives from Grand Lodges in the several States. Here you will perceive is another essential feature of republicanism which it lacks. The Subordinate Lodges pay "ten per cent. on their receipts" to the Grand Lodge of the United States, but they have no voice, directly, in its counsels and decisions. Here we have a recognition of the principle of taxation without representation—a principle against which our fathers of the Revolution contended, even to the loss of life.

We will not, however, dwell upon these matters; and we would simply remark, that it is impossible to form any just conception of the character of its government, without

a more thorough discussion than we are able at present to undertake.

Passing over the character of the government of this Order, we would now direct your attention, as further proof of our statement in reference to the sacrifice of independence, which a connexion with this society involves, to the fact that, according to its laws, no one of its members, without the express sanction of the lodge, is permitted to deliver a public lecture in its behalf. The "Digest of the Laws of the Order," (page 31,) says: "The delivery of lectures on Odd-Fellowship, either in lodges, or in public, is not consistent with the duties of brethren of the Order, unless they are authorized to act in such a capacity by special enactment in lodges of the State, District, or Territory, within whose jurisdiction the lectures are delivered; and all enactments of Grand or Subordinate Lodges, having such an object in view, should expire by limitation within some reasonable space of time." Here we have, by the laws of the society, a restriction laid upon the right of free speech—a right which every American claims as essential to that freedom which it is his

privilege to enjoy. According to this restriction, there is not an Odd-Fellow in this district, whatever he may suppose to be the necessity for it, who can, as a true Odd-Fellow, open his mouth before a public assembly in defence of his Order, without its permission. We do not say that this liberty is never taken ; but we say that, according to the language of the law, no one, as a true Odd-Fellow, can exercise it.

Now, let those who are willing to do so, give up their right to speak either in public or in private, upon any subject they may deem worthy the attention of the community. For one, however, such a right I shall never be willing to surrender to any society of men. God has given me my speech, and I shall ever claim the liberty to employ it, in subjection to his law, and to his law alone, whenever and however my judgment and my conscience direct me. Let the government of the United States take such a liberty with its citizens, and a feeling of indignation would burst forth from every quarter ; and there is scarcely a citizen throughout the country who would not place himself in an attitude of decided and

determined hostility to such an unwarranted assumption of power. And yet, here we have a voluntary society placing a padlock upon the mouths of its members; and that, too, outside the walls of the lodge. Can you, as men, as American citizens, and as Christians, submit to such a restriction? If you are prepared to give an affirmative answer to this question, then tell me, what is the difference between the assumption of such a power, on the part of a merely voluntary association, and its exercise by the government of the United States?

But that you may still more clearly see the sacrifice of individual responsibility and independence which is involved in a connexion with this Order, allow me to read to you some of the directions which the author of the Manual gives to persons in reference to their initiation. Let me here quote those words referred to in our last lecture, and which you will find on page 91 of the Manual: "Give yourself passively to your guides, to lead you whithersoever they will. Answer seriously and clearly all questions proposed. Obey promptly all directions given you." On the

preceding page we have the following: "If admitted, having manifested the requisite confidence and frankness, go on your way, all attention to the solemn lessons in store for you. Fear nothing, be appearances what they may." Here let me ask you, does not such an advice as this which we have just quoted, plainly indicate that the appearances are such as are calculated to excite the fears of a person, while undergoing the process of initiation? And can I reconcile it with that self-respect which it becomes me, as a man, to cherish, thus to give myself up into the hands of a company of persons whose conduct towards me will be such as to render an advice of this kind necessary? Such advice might be well enough for a person who would allow himself to be blindfolded; but they can have little application to him who will not be called upon to proceed a step further than he has the approbation of his conscience and his judgment. If I am to be allowed ever to maintain my individual responsibility, why tell me to "give myself passively to my guides, to lead me whithersoever they will?" Is the doctrine of passive obedience consistent with

that of individual responsibility? True, the author of the Manual tells us that "the solemnities of initiation may be novel, even startling by their novelty; but they are perfectly chaste, dignified, and serious, as the lessons they are designed to teach." If this be so, why inculcate the doctrine of passive obedience? But I care not whether this be so or not; I regard it as nothing less than an insult to my moral and rational nature, to be told to give myself up passively to any set of men, to lead me whithersoever they will.

It is, however, not merely in the places to which we have referred you, that such instructions are tendered for the benefit of persons in their admission into the mysteries of the Order. The candidate for an introduction into the Golden Rule Degree is told, on page 279, to "be patient in all required of him." Again, on page 263, speaking of applications and admissions to the Subordinate Encampments, the author says to the candidate: "If elected, go forward with a stout heart; fear nothing, for others have passed the way before you, and invite you onward." Let these quotations suffice. We are satisfied

that those who will duly and dispassionately consider these objections, will regard them as well-founded; that, by the proofs we have adduced, a connexion with the Order necessarily requires a sacrifice of that feeling of individual responsibility, self-respect, and independence, which it becomes us as men, as Americans, and as Christians, ever to cherish.

7. *We object to this society, because it falsifies its own pretensions.* You are perhaps aware what are the pretensions of this society—that it claims to unite, in one brotherhood, the whole family of man. We say you are aware of this fact, for who has not heard the boasts of Odd-Fellows, in regard to the world-wide character of its benevolence? How often do we hear it asserted, that its charities are as universal as the human race. Although the frequency with which such pretensions are put forth has doubtless rendered you familiar with them, it will perhaps be well to recur to a few of them, as they are contained in our well-authenticated Manual.

On page 80, the author says:—"This internal, truly living spirit of love and of uni-

versal fraternity, pervading all our rituals and ceremonies; recognised in emblems, colours, and regalia; using every adjunct for strengthening its influence on the soul; speaking to ear and eye in every lecture, charge, sign, and token, and to the touch in grip and pressure; and manifesting itself (silently like rain, and sunshine, and electricity) in beneficent organizations and institutions; this soul of all its teachings and workings is Odd-Fellowship, the hidden name in the white stone, which he knoweth best who most truly possesses it."

Again, 'on the same page, the author says:—"To extend our operations and increase our advantages and usefulness together, we have united all these Lodges in a general Order, which we desire to render universal as the family of man on earth."

Again, on page 100, in speaking of the coming of that blissful period, in which there will be a universal prevalence of the principles of Odd-Fellowship, he says:—"Such a period may be expected on the ground of man's origin and nature, also. For God 'hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth.'"

On page 103, you will find the following modest pretensions of this worthy author, in behalf of Odd-Fellowship:—"Odd-Fellowship is a miniature representation, among a chosen few, of that fraternity which God has instituted among men. Few as are those who would represent it, the great principle is wide enough for all. On the broad platform of brotherhood, all nations, parties, and sects, can meet and freely mingle in offices of needed kindnesses and mutual well-doing. Fraternity, therefore, is the cornerstone on which our forefathers based our Order; fraternity in the family of mankind, illustrated in our family, the Lodge, and the Order. As all men have God for their Father, all are brethren, and we would illustrate this great fact in all our offices of mutual aid, relief, sympathy, and benevolence."

We may also quote to you from page 177:—"You learn, then, that our *Odd-Fellowship* is a unity of hearts and purposes to resist the heartlessness and selfishness of the world around us. Having become one with us and of us in that fellowship, and assumed

our obligations, we can better demonstrate to you that our greatest duty and highest aim is the promotion of a practical, loving fraternity of mankind. For the entire human race is but one family, not only physically, but spiritually, not only theoretically, but really and truly. Each member, therefore, is bound to aid the rest. Our mission is not a narrow one. ‘None of us liveth to himself.’ We are created and placed here to labour for our fellow-men, to advance our age, elevate our country, and improve our race.”*

* In a word, “universal love to all mankind,” and a mutual sympathy with the wants of our fraternal brethren, are the two great pillars that support the laudable capital of Odd-Fellowship.—*Odd-Fellow’s Text Book, page 98.*

Shall a man, a unit in the universal kingdom of God, stand aloof from his fellow-unit because he may not be of the same faith or nation as himself? Nay! The question must not be, “Is he a Christian, or is he a Jew, or a Mohammedan? is he a European, or an American, an Asiatic, or African?” but, “Is he a MAN AND A BROTHER?”—*Odd-Fellow’s Text Book, page 155.*

She teaches a reverence for humanity. She tells us that “MAN” is a greater name than “President” or “King.” Though his back may be ragged, his hands hard, and his countenance sunburnt, yet, inasmuch as he possesses the human face and form, insomuch does he

This will surely suffice from the Manual..

If you refer to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the United States, you will find it declared, in the Preamble, that “Odd-Fellowship is based upon the eternal principles of *universal* friendship, philanthropy, and beneficence.”

Such, then, are the pretensions of this Order. Such are the claims it puts forth to the world. These pretensions and these claims, we have said, it falsifies. And now we shall adduce the proof on which this grave charge is based.

Nearly one-half of the human family—and that, too, the most dependent portion of it—is, by law, excluded from membership in the Order. We refer to the female sex. The Constitution expressly declares, “No person shall be admitted to membership, or be initiated into the mysteries of the Order, *unless he be a male.*”

Perhaps I may be told that there is a Degree, belonging to the Order, called the partake of the Divinity: and if his character is unsullied and his morals fair, we take him by the hand and hail him *brother!*—*Odd Fellow's Text Book, page 172.*

“Degree of Rebekah, or Ladies’ Degree.” I admit that such is the case; but here are two questions which I would propound to the members of the Order, in relation to this Degree. In the first place, when was this Degree instituted? By referring to the Manual, an answer to this question will be obtained. According to this authority, it “was adopted by the Grand Lodge of the United States, at its session in September, 1851, and went into operation with the year 1852.” It was not, therefore, until the year 1852, that a single female could be initiated into the mysteries of this Order, which, if we may believe the pretensions of its members, is based upon the principles of *universal* benevolence, and the brotherhood of man. It would seem that the founders of this institution never thought of the sisterhood of woman. But we have another question to propose, in relation to this Degree; and that is, What is its character, and what are the privileges it confers? On this subject we have a little information to communicate. According to the Manual, it is only the *wives of members* who are admitted, and these not

the wives of all its members, but only of those who belong to the Scarlet Degree.

But this is not all. We are expressly assured that there are no pecuniary benefits connected with it. We are, moreover, told that "the continuance in good standing of the ladies of this Degree, depends entirely upon the good standing, morally and pecuniarily, of their husbands." From these considerations, it is plain that females, properly speaking, are not known in this Order, as members having rights and privileges in common with the male members. They are regarded rather as appendages to their husbands. They are permitted to come in along with their husbands, that they may perform certain duties in which it is desirable to have their services. It is not in virtue of the relation which they sustain to God as the subjects of his moral government, or to their fellow-beings as members of civil society, that any are admitted to a knowledge of those "eternal principles of *universal* friendship, philanthropy, and beneficence," upon which "Odd-Fellowship is based," and which constitute its glory.

Nor is this all. Not only is this large class of God's rational and accountable creatures excluded by the provision of the Constitution, but "all who are under twenty-one years of age," and those who are advanced in years and have any bodily infirmity. The fifth Section of the second Article of the By-Laws of the Lafayette Lodge of the State of Pennsylvania, reads as follows:— "No person shall be eligible to membership, who, at the time of his application, may have any bodily infirmities, so as to render him incapable of following his usual occupation, or being over fifty years of age." You will perceive here that another very large class of the human family is, by express law, excluded from the privileges of membership in an Order which is "based upon the principles of *universal* benevolence," and the "advantages and usefulness" of which Order, the members, we are told, "desire to make as universal as the family of man on earth."

But this is not all. We have seen that females are excluded. We have seen that the young, the aged, and the infirm are excluded. We have now to show you that a

whole race of men is, by the Constitution shut out from the benefits of the Order, whether they be male or female, old or young, infirm or robust, rich or poor. On page 49 of the "Digest of Laws," you will find it expressly declared, under Article 3d, that "no person is eligible to membership in any subordinate Lodge, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the United States, or of the Grand Lodge of British North America, or of any of the Grand Lodges by either of the said supreme bodies established, except he be a *free white* male." Here, you will observe, there are three qualifications necessary to eligibility. In the first place, he must be so fortunate as to be one of the "Lords of creation;" in the second place, he must be free;—the eternal principles of universal philanthropy which characterizes the Order, extend not to the slave; and in the third place, he must be of the right colour. According to this provision of the Order, the whole African race—and if it were applied according to the letter of it, many other races of the human family—are excluded from a participation in its benefits.

They are once and for ever shut out from those unspeakably precious blessings which it is destined to confer upon mankind.

Now here let us not be misunderstood. We are bringing no charge against this Order, for excluding from membership any man, or any class of men, any woman, or any class of women; whatever we may think of the selfishness of such an exclusive system we are not making this the foundation of any charge whatever. The charge is, that this Order falsifies its pretensions; and have we not established this charge beyond dispute? Have we not shown you that the very Preamble to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the United States claims for the Order that it is "based upon the eternal principles of *universal* friendship, philanthropy, and beneficence,"—that the Manual asserts that the fundamental principle on which it proceeds is, that "*the entire human race* is but one family, not only physically, but spiritually, not only theoretically, but really and truly." Here we are exhorted to "unite in furthering the mission of Odd-Fellowship, till man every where shall behold in every fellow-

man a brother; till mankind shall indeed be one family, and one great law, the law of love, shall bind continents, isles, and nations, in one community for ever." Let it be remembered, too, that these principles, "the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man," as they are called in the Manual, are declared, by those who have authority to speak for it, the great principles of the Order. In nothing else does it so much consist as in these principles. They constitute its glory—its "living spirit." Has it, then, we have only to ask you, in view of the facts we have adduced, this living spirit? How can any man, in the very face of these facts, claim for it such a spirit? The very letter of its Constitution disproves all such boastful assertions.

This, then, is the charge which we bring against the Order. It presents itself in a false light before the community. It claims that which does not belong to it. If it appeared before us simply as a mutual insurance society, it might admit or exclude whom it pleased, without any expression of disapprobation on our part. But presenting

itself, as it does, before the community, as a society claiming to be governed by the principles of *universal benevolence*, and as destined to regenerate and reform the world, such a course deserves, and shall never fail to receive our most decided condemnation. Does it not deserve, and shall it not receive yours? Can such facts as those to which we have referred you, fail to convince you that this society is not what it professes to be, and is therefore unworthy of your confidence?

8. *We object to this society, because it is not, in reality, as it assumes to be, a benevolent or charitable institution.* This objection we might with propriety have included in the one we have already been considering; but we wish to give a distinct prominence to it, as, in our view, possessing special importance. Let us, then, examine, for a few moments, the character of the benevolence and philanthropy which are claimed for this society. Before entering upon this examination, we wish to guard against a misrepresentation or misunderstanding of our remarks. We are not considering the society now, simply as a

mutual insurance society—we are considering it as a benevolent or charitable society—a society professing to bring into exercise that spirit of love and good will which we are bound to cherish towards our fellow-men. The object of these remarks is to ascertain whether it has any just claim to our regards as a society of this kind—whether it affords a suitable opportunity and occasion for the exercise of that benevolence which the Saviour has taught us by his precepts, and so eminently illustrated by his example. That this cannot be affirmed of the Order, will appear from the following facts.

(1.) In the exercise of this professed benevolence, its system comes in direct contact with the injunctions of scripture in reference to those who are to be the *objects* of our benevolence. The apostle Paul says, in Gal. vi. 10, “As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, *especially to them who are of the household of faith.*” Here you will perceive we are, in the plainest manner, directed to make “the household of faith” the first and chief objects of our beneficence. If now you refer to page 276 of the Manual,

you will find that the author, in addressing the members of the Patriarchal Degree, says, "Your brother Patriarchs, let them *especially* share your sympathy and experience your aid."* The apostle Paul says, "Let the *household of faith* share your sympathy and experience your aid." The author of the Manual, with the sanction of his Order, says, let your *brother Patriarchs* especially share your sympathy and experience your aid. Is it not plain, therefore, that the rules by which Odd-Fellows are governed, in the exercise of a spirit of benevolence, are not the rules of the Bible? Their benevolence, therefore, whatever may be said of it, is not a Bible benevolence. God says do good especially to your brethren in Christ—this Order says, do good especially to your brethren in Odd-Fellowship.

(2.) In the exercise of this benevolence which belongs to Odd-Fellowship, there is no difference made as to the circumstances of the recipients of its favours. In proof of this, we shall refer you to the express words

* Its first duty is to its own household, but its influence is felt beyond.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book*, page 39.

of the Manual. On page 66, the author says, "We pay the rich member, when sick, the same amount per week that we pay to our poorer brethren." Now we contend that benevolence or charity necessarily supposes that the individual is in circumstances of need. When this idea is not in the mind of the giver, there can be nothing of that compassion and sympathy which constitute the very soul of all true benevolence. It is the existence of these feelings, and the moral influence which they are calculated to exert upon the heart of the donor, that make it, in the expressive language of our Lord, "more blessed to give than to receive." Here is the reward of true charity—a reward which the Odd-Fellow cannot, from the nature of the case, realize, for he knows not whether his contributions shall go to fill the coffers of the rich, or to alleviate the miseries of the poor.

(3.) The contributions which are made by this society for the relief even of the poor, cannot be regarded as acts of benevolence, because they are the payment of just dues. They are contributions to which each member

has a claim—a claim founded upon the principle of justice. It is upon this principle that the society is organized. Every member contributes so much on entering the society, and so much per week, and so much on special occasions, and the amount required is so regulated as to be found sufficient to secure a fund from which he is entitled to draw in case of sickness. The principle is precisely the same as that which controls any insurance society for whatever purpose established. But lest we should be charged with misrepresenting the matter, we shall as usual give you our authority for this statement. "We aim," says the author of the Manual, page 66, "to abolish all considerations of wealth or poverty, in our fraternity; to make all feel that, as Odd-Fellows at least, they are not only brethren, but equals. He who did not pay an equivalent would feel degraded at receiving benefits; would feel that they were not his just due, but alms." Here we have it clearly stated that every member *pays an equivalent* for what he re-

ceives—that the amount contributed to him is his *just due*.*

Indeed so strictly is this principle adhered to, that the ground on which the members of the Rebekah Degree are excluded from a participation in the pecuniary benefits of the society, is, according to the declaration of the author of the Manual, page 78, that “no fee or weekly dues” are “required” of them. In further confirmation of this fact, we may remark that the same author, on page 198, says: “There are few old members of the Order who cannot relate some case of peculiar hardship, caused by non-payment of dues. Some good, but careless brother, who neglected this small item of duty until he was suddenly called out of this life, was found to be not beneficial, and his widow and orphans, when *most* in need, were left destitute of all *legal* claims on the fund he had for years been aiding to accumulate. Such cases,” continues the author, “too frequently

* Those Lodges which give large benefits charge large initiation-fees and dues. Every worthy brother has a positive right to his weekly allowance.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book, page 58.*

occurring in our Lodges and Encampments, may be yours."

Have we not, then, proved beyond the possibility of a doubt that the whole system is based upon the *quid pro quo* principle?

Now, we have no objections to this principle in itself, but we have most serious objections to a principle of this kind being palmed upon the community as a principle of benevolence, and to any society where this is the regulating principle of its operations, being called a benevolent society. Why, we are told by the author of the Manual, that "even when extraordinary events render it necessary to give extra aid to an unfortunate brother, it still comes from a fund he aided to create for such purposes, and to which even his wealthiest brother *may* be reduced to apply."

Let us, therefore, hear no more about the charity of Odd-Fellows.

Some of you may have noticed in the Ledger of last week, an account of the presentation of a beautiful banner, by some of the ladies of West Philadelphia to one of the Lodges of the Order, on which were inscribed

these words:—"The first of these is charity." (We presume they meant to quote 1 Cor. xiii. 13, where the apostle says, "*The greatest of these is charity.*") It is by such exhibitions as this that the public has been misled. In the name of this holy and heaven-born virtue, I here enter my protest against the dishonour which is cast upon her by referring to the payment of just dues as an illustration of her spirit. No, no; true charity seeketh not her own. She gives not that she may receive again. Such is the charity of the Bible—such is not the charity which presides over the Lodge.

This matter, my hearers, possesses an importance of no ordinary magnitude. We believe that the claims which this Order puts forth as a charitable institution secure for it a favour and patronage which, if its true character were known, it would never receive, especially among those who have been accustomed to contemplate and admire this heavenly grace, as it is delineated by the pencil of inspiration in the 13th chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Firmly persuaded as we are that the system

of Odd-Fellowship operates injuriously to the interests of the church and the community at large, (as we have endeavoured, to some extent, to show you in our preceding lectures, and hope more fully to show you in those that are to follow,) we are not willing that it should wear a dress, when it presents itself before the public, which does not rightfully belong to it. We are not willing that the pastor and members of this congregation, known as they are to be, in common with many others, opposed to the Order, should be regarded as opposing a charitable institution, properly so called. No; let an institution exhibiting the charity of the gospel be formed, and he who now addresses you will be among the first to contribute to its support, and exert what influence he may have, to advance its interests. Or let a mutual insurance society be established upon proper principles, and there is no danger of its incurring any opposition. On the contrary, it would afford me pleasure to be instrumental, in any way, in commanding to the favourable regards of the community, such an organization.

Viewing the society of Odd-Fellows simply
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in the light of a *mutual insurance society*, we see not why it should have any special claims upon the regards of the community. That it is a beneficial society, a society that secures to its members a certain amount per week, in case of sickness, and in case of death appropriates a certain sum to the widow and orphans, we do not deny, nor have we any disposition to deny it. It would be strange, indeed, if it were not so. If it were not for this feature of the society, the list of its membership, we apprehend, would be very different from what it is. Let the society cease to hold out the idea of benefits to its members, let it be converted at once into a charitable institution, and time will tell the power of its other attractions, and the strength of that tie of loving brotherhood by which its members now profess to be bound. We, therefore, freely admit that it makes provision for its members.

But as a society of this kind, has it—apart from the serious objections to which, in other respects, it is liable—any special claims upon the regards of the community? In our opinion it has not. For this opinion we shall

give you our reasons. Here let me lay before you the concession of the author of the Manual, on this point. He expressly says, on page 86, that a person "may possibly be insured against sickness as certainly and more cheaply in a mere insurance association." Now such an admission as this coming from such a source speaks volumes. We have no idea that it would have been made by a man whose heart seems to have been overflowing with zeal for a cause to advocate and illustrate the principles of which he has written a book of nearly 400 pages. We hold up this admission, then, by one of the learned and ardent friends of the Order, as a complete answer to all the boastful asseverations of its members, as to the pecuniary advantages to be secured by a connexion with it. If we are to believe what we hear every day, there is no society like that of the Order of Odd-Fellows, for the provision it makes to supply the wants of its members. Here, however, we are informed by one who has authority to speak on the subject, that the Odd-Fellow "*may* possibly be insured against sickness as certainly and more

cheaply in a mere insurance association." True, it is only a possibility, according to our author; but is it too much to infer a very strong probability from an admission like this, coming from such a source?

This probability, we think, may be inferred, not only from the admission of the author, but from the vast expense to which a connexion with this society subjects every one of its members. Allow me to read you a few extracts from the Constitution and By-Laws of the Lafayette Lodge. Sec. 1st of Art. 2d, says—"The initiation-fee shall not be less than five dollars." By referring to Secs. 1st and 2d of Article 2d of the By-Laws, you will find the following:—

"Sec. 1st.—Every person initiated into the mysteries of Odd-Fellowship in this Lodge, under *forty years* of age, shall pay the sum of *fifteen dollars*; if over forty years of age, he shall pay for each year, in addition thereto, the sum of one dollar.

"Sec. 2d.—Any brother of this Order, depositing his card in this Lodge, under forty years of age, shall pay the sum of *ten dollars*, and for every year over forty, he shall pay

for each year, in addition thereto, the sum of two dollars."

The Third Article reads as follows:—

"Every member of this Lodge shall pay into the funds thereof a contribution of one dollar and twenty-five cents as dues, every three months."

Article 12th of the By-Laws, respecting Degrees, is in the following words:—

"Every member applying for his Degrees and qualified, according to Art. 6th of the Constitution, shall pay to the Secretary, on the receipt of his certificate, as follows:—for the first and second, one dollar each; for the third and fourth, one dollar and fifty cents each; for the fifth, two dollars."*

We may also read Sec. 1st of Art. 4th:—

"No brother shall be entitled to receive

* The Order of Odd-Fellowship consists of two several branches, viz., Lodges and Encampments. The Lodges comprise six, and the Encampments three Degrees. These, with the exception of Degrees obtained through official service, embrace the entire work of the Order, the Royal-Purple Degree, of the Encampment, being the highest and last. The cost of attaining these nine Degrees varies in different localities; but usually it does not exceed forty, and in some States it is less than thirty dollars.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book, page 49.*

benefits until he shall have been a member of this Lodge one year; nor then, if indebted to the Lodge for weekly dues, in a sum exceeding one dollar and twenty-five cents, and such fines as shall have been assessed three months, until eight weeks after such arrears are fully paid; if over six months in arrears, until thirteen weeks thereafter."

According to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the United States, should five members wish to form themselves into a subordinate Lodge, or seven into a subordinate Encampment, they must pay for their charter the sum of thirty dollars. The same sum must be paid for a charter for the opening of a Grand Lodge, or a Grand Encampment. In addition to that, they must pay for the travelling expenses of the officers appointed to open the Lodge or Encampment, and for the entertainment of the visitors. Each of the Grand Lodges must pay twenty dollars for every vote to which it is entitled in the Grand Lodge of the United States; and the Grand Lodge "may impose such dues upon its subordinates as may be necessary to defray its expenses." But we must bring this

enumeration to a close. Indeed it would require more time than we can well spare to give you any thing like an adequate view of the vast expenses, viewed in the aggregate, to which a connexion with this Order subjects every one of its members. For this we must refer you to the books themselves, where you will see it is *Pay! PAY! PAY!** The regu-

* In the Symbol and Odd-Fellow's Magazine for 1845, we find the Annual Report of the Grand Corresponding and Recording Secretary of the Right Worthy Grand Lodge of the United States, which gives a bird's eye view of the condition of the Order in the various sections of the country. At the close is a summary (not entirely complete) of the increase and operations of the Order, from 1840 to 1845, inclusive, in the United States. During these six years, the number of initiations was 62,804; the amount of revenue was \$1,262,858,57; the sum expended for relief was, \$333,788,28; the number of contributing members was, 185,091; the number of Lodges formed was, 2,105. Deduct the sum of \$333,778,28 expended for "relief," from \$1,262,858,57, the amount of revenue, and there remains the enormous sum of \$929, 080,29, unaccounted for, nearly all of which, it is probable, was expended in idle show and expensive decorations.—*Phila. Paper.*

There are in the United States thirty-one Grand Lodges, two thousand four hundred subordinate Lodges, and nearly two hundred thousand contributing members. According to the official data of the past year (1850,) one

lar working of the system is kept up by a constant appeal to the pocket. Fines and forfeits appear to be among the chief appli-

million two hundred and eighteen thousand dollars were paid into the funds of those Lodges; and the amount paid out, during the same period, to sick brothers, for funeral expenses, etc., was half a million of dollars.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book, page 243.*

The sagacious author, after giving us this statement, says, “I leave it to your own candour and magnanimity to decide whether the disbursement of half a million of dollars for one year, under the direction of a chosen and judicious ‘sick committee,’ as it is called, has done any good.” Indeed! Reader suppose we leave it to your “candour and magnanimity to decide” how much good has been done by the other half a million and one hundred and eighteen thousand dollars added to it, of which we have no account. The author tells us, that his “Address for the use of Odd-Fellows” from which we have taken the above remark, is as “interesting as some Addresses for which the Lodge might be required to pay fifty or a hundred dollars.” If we knew how many fifties or hundreds of dollars were annually paid out for such *interesting Addresses*, we would have a little information as to the objects to which this enormous sum contributed for *charitable purposes* has been applied.

The Phila. Ledger gives the “Annual Report of the Grand and Subordinate Lodges to the Right Worthy Grand Lodge of the United States for the year ending June 30, 1852,” according to which the “Statistics of Odd-Fellowship are as follows:”—number of Lodges,

ances in this society of *brotherly love*. Let any one read these books, and then say whether the Odd-Fellow will not be likely, in the language of Dr. Franklin, to "pay well for his whistle," before the account is finally settled between him and the Order. Such an examination would result in the conviction that if this institution, which he has been in the habit of regarding as such a charitable institution, puts "with the one hand a penny in the urn of poverty, it with the other takes a shilling out." From the very necessities of the case it must be so. Look at the vast expense incurred by the purchase of regalia and other appurtenances, the numerous advertisements which are to be seen in almost every newspaper, the salaries of their officers, the travelling expenses and mileage of the Representatives to the Grand Lodges of the several States, and to the Grand Lodge of the United States, with their per diem allow-

2,729; Institutions, 25,776; Suspensions, 12,018; Past Grands, 25,813; Contributing members, 193,298; Total amount of relief, \$514,731,03; Revenue of Subordinate Lodges, \$1,164,331,15." *Quere.* What has this most *charitable* institution to show for the balance, amounting to the small sum of \$649,600,12?

ance while in session, and the erection of their gorgeous and magnificent temples. Think of the enormous sums of money which this last item must require. Where does all this money come from? Why, it comes from the members of the Order, many of whom are the sons of toil. Who paid for the "beautiful gold medal and a service of plate, valued at \$500," given to Thomas Wildey by the Grand Lodge of the United States? Are you an Odd-Fellow?—You paid for it. Yes, this most charitable institution took it out of your pocket, and consequently, if you are a husband and father, out of the mouths of your wife and children. Oh, my hearers, I confess to a feeling of deep indignation, when I hear the members of this Order boasting of its charities, and especially when I hear professing Christians lauding it, in this respect, above the blood-bought church of the Son of God. Shame upon such Christians! Let them put into the church, for the same purpose, the money which they put into the Lodge, and then charge her with recreancy to her duty in this respect. But while they throw it into the treasury of the Lodge, is it

any wonder that the church should let them look to the Lodge for some returns for the sacrifices they have made? While they prefer to minister about the things of the temple of Odd-Fellowship, is it any wonder that the church should let them live of the things of the temple? While they prefer to wait at its altar, (perhaps never showing themselves at a weekly prayer-meeting,) is it any wonder that they should have the exclusive honour of being partakers with the altar around which their affections so fondly cluster, and to which they are willing to devote so much of their time and resources? We are very far from saying that the church has done all her duty to her poor members; but we charge much of her short-comings in this respect upon the multiplication of secret associations, and the favour with which they have been regarded by the Christian community. Members of the church will pour their contributions into a secret society, which ignores the name of Jesus, and then turn round and scoff at the church for the cold neglect with which she treats her poor. Would that I could awaken my Christian

brethren in this district, who love the church as children should love their mother, and who are tender of her interests and her honour, to a due consciousness of what I verily believe to be one great cause of the want of that energy and self-denial, which the followers of Jesus are bound to show in the service of their Master.

LECTURE IV.

HAVING in my last lecture endeavoured to show you that Odd-Fellowship is inconsistent with that feeling of individual responsibility which it is our duty at all times to cherish; and also that the Order has no claim upon the regards of the community as a charitable institution, nor any special claim upon its regards, viewed simply in the light of a beneficial or mutual insurance society, I shall now, without any prefatory remarks, proceed to submit to your judgment other objections, which an examination of the authorized publications of the Order has suggested to my mind, and which I believe to be well-founded.

9. *We object, that it is such an organization as is, in its own nature, liable to operate injuriously to the rights and interests of the community.* In following us in the remarks which we propose to make on this part of our sub-

ject, we wish you to keep in mind the idea that it is a secret society—a fact which we have already established by unquestionable proof.

We affirm that the existence of such a society as this in the community, is calculated to prevent honesty and industry from meeting with their due rewards. The members of this society look upon themselves as a “covenanted fraternity.” They regard themselves as bound together by solemn covenant ties. Indeed, so essentially does this idea enter into its organization and design, that they have a degree called the “Covenant Degree”—the emblem of which degree is a “Bundle of rods”—an emblem adopted evidently for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing this idea. Let this fact be borne in mind. You will also recollect, what we endeavoured to show you in our last lecture, that Odd-Fellows are bound to extend their sympathy and aid *especially* to their brethren of the Order. This obligation flows from the very relation they sustain to each other as a covenanted fraternity. They certainly covenant to each other their mutual sympathy and aid.

Such being the case, is it not most reasonable to suppose that their influence in all the business transactions of life will be so directed as to advance the interests of their own members.* Such a supposition is most reasonable. It is founded upon the very nature of their organization, and is evidently in accordance with the design of the formation of any such society. Well, we would ask you whether a society so operating, and evidently designed so to operate, is not an injury to the community at large? Here is an extensive factory, in the community, having a multitude of operatives employed. At the head of this factory, let us suppose, is a member of this society. Tell me who are the men whom he will be most likely, as a faithful Odd Fellow, to provide with work. Are they not those who can give him "the grip," and with whom he is in the habit of associating at the Lodge? Will the man who cannot speak to him with any other member but the tongue, stand an equal

* It is well enough for Odd-Fellows to encourage each other in business, preferring to employ brothers rather than strangers, provided they can be accommodated equally as well.—*Odd-Fellow's Text-Book*, page 77.

chance with him who can not only address himself (in the words of the author of the Manual) to the ear, but to the eye and the touch? We think not. However industrious and honest a man he may be, and however irreproachable his character, the *odds* will be against him, simply from the fact that he is not an Odd-Fellow. I submit it to your candid judgments whether it is not reasonable, from the very nature and object of the organization, and the appliances which its members have ever at command, to suppose that such would be the case. Surely it is not too much to suppose that covenants which bind persons together like a "bundle of rods," will have all the influence we have ascribed to them.

It may perhaps be denied that injury is done to any one in this way; and we may be challenged to show cases in confirmation of the charge we have made. The challenge, however, is unreasonable. The very secrecy of their "signs" and "grips" necessarily prevents an exposure of such cases. It is sufficient for us to show that the principles which govern the society are such as would naturally lead to such a course of action on

the part of its members. The remark may be thought to be the dictate of prejudice, and to spring from a want of charity; but from what we know of human nature, and its liability to be controlled by such influences as those to which we have referred, we have not the least doubt that there have been hundreds of cases in which honest merit has had to give way to the claims of the brotherhood. Indeed, this feature of the society, we believe, lies at the foundation of much of its success. Men resort to it in the hope that they will thereby secure the patronage of the Order. Look then, my friends, dispassionately at this matter, and tell me whether such a secret institution, thus operating, can fail to be injurious in its influence upon the interests of the community. May it not with the greatest propriety be regarded as a combination of the one class against the interests of another. Can honesty, industry, and sobriety, have a fair field under such circumstances? We think not—in all charity we think not.

On this ground, therefore, we are decidedly opposed to this and all similar secret associations. It benefits the few at the expense of

the many. And how cruel does this oppression become, when those who are thus treated have declined, from conscientious motives, to avail themselves of the advantages which a connexion with such a society would be likely to confer upon them!

But this is not all. Not only do we object to such a society as is in this respect injurious in its tendencies, but we believe that, from the very nature of its organization, it is liable to operate against the claims of justice. Let me ask you, my friends, knowing the strong ties by which the members of this society are bound together, the close and intimate relationship which exists between them as members of the same *covenanted* fraternity, would you feel as safe to have your cause brought before a judge and jury of Odd-Fellows, if the decision of this judge and jury would materially affect the interests of a member of this covenanted fraternity, and especially one who occupied a high place in their lodge? We believe you would not. You would feel that those vows and pledges which they had given to extend their sympathy and aid to each other, would operate against you; that

they would have (perhaps unconsciously) their influence upon the minds and hearts of at least some of those to whom you were looking for the vindication of your rights.

We know that a strong feeling of suspicion does exist in the minds of many persons, that the tendency of such secret associations is to thwart the claims of justice. It is not long since this impression operated so powerfully in the community, that the question whether secret societies should be tolerated, agitated the whole land, east, west, north and south. The subject was brought before our Legislatures; and in some instances laws were passed declaring their existence to be incompatible with the public interests. In this State, a Governor was elected on the ground of his opposition to such societies. It is true that Masonry and Anti-Masonry was the great question; yet the objections brought against this society were such as would be equally applicable to the society of Odd-Fellows. This institution, at the time of that deep and widespread excitement, was only in its infancy. It was scarcely known in the community. The author of our well authenticated Manual ex-

pressly says, that “The only *successful* institution of Odd-Fellowship in this country—the fountain of our present organization—dates no farther back than 1819.”* It was not, according to this Manual, until 1822, that there were lodges in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. At that time, Masonry was in full and successful operation. Events occurred which awakened throughout the community a feeling of deep and decided opposition to the Order of Masonry, as some of you will perhaps recollect. This opposition, however was based on such grounds as to materially affect the interests of Odd-Fellowship, insignificant as it then was. In proof of this, allow me to read from the 37th page of the Manual: “About this period (1829) the Anti-Masonic excitement, which arose in Western New York two years previously, spread rapidly abroad over the land.. In several of the Northern States it took such general possession of the public feelings as to affect very

* Washington Lodge No. 1, was organized at the house of Wm. Lupton, sign of the “Seven Stars,” Second street, Baltimore, on the 26th of April, 1819, by Thomas Wildey, John Welsh, John Duncan, John Cheathem, and Richard Rushworth.—*Odd-Fellow’s Text Book*, page 34.

materially the prosperity of our Order also, by the general prejudice excited against all, so termed, ‘secret societies.’ In Massachusetts the Order entirely died away. In Rhode Island, where it had just been planted, it obtained not root sufficient to grow. In New York, an unhappy dissension in regard to the place of the seat of the Grand Lodge, caused much difficulty; and, together with Anti-Masonic prejudices, prevented the spread of the Order. In Pennsylvania, the prejudice against ‘secret societies’ caused a diminution of our lodges; so that from fifty Subordinates in this State, in 1832, a decline to forty only, had taken place by 1838 and 1839. And in Delaware a decline of numbers prevented the institution of a permanent Grand Lodge, though a charter had been issued for that purpose.”

Here you will perceive, my hearers, that Masonry has been denounced by the community as a dangerous institution, and that in this denunciation Odd-Fellowship has shared in proportion to its numbers. Both the societies were regarded as possessing a strong family likeness, which they unquestionably

do. We hold up this admitted fact, then, as affording strong presumptive evidence of the injurious tendencies of such an institution. Is it reasonable to suppose that an institution, characterized by all that benevolence which is claimed for it by its friends, would thus wither, and in some places die away, under the indignant frowns of the most moral portion of the community that is to be found in any part of the United States and, perhaps, in the world, without any just occasion whatever having been given for it? Such a supposition we affirm to be most unreasonable, after making all the allowances which can justly be claimed, for the influence of prejudice and the ambition of political leaders. Does it not, at least, conclusively show that the very organization of the society is such as is calculated to awaken, in the community, a feeling of distrust and suspicion? And is it for the good of the community that you or I should be called to appear before a court of justice with such a feeling in our breasts? Who will dare assert that it is? Surely the purity of the ermine and the integrity of the jury box

ought to be above all suspicion. And surely the existence of any society in the community, that has a tendency to foster and keep alive such a suspicion, is so far a public evil—is so far calculated to relax the bonds of civil society.

The author of the Manual, on page 86, in speaking of the privileges of Odd-Fellows, makes this remark, “If an Odd-Fellow falls under the cold suspicions of an unfriendly world, and is cast unmeritedly into a felon’s cell, brothers are active around him with counsel, and labour to remove the dark web of circumstances that becloud his fame or endanger his life, to secure him a fair trial, and, if just, a proper acquittal and a safe return to society and friends.” Here, then, according to this, we have in our midst a society, the obligations of which bind its members actively to interest themselves in the cause of a brother as an alleged violator of the laws of his country. Tell me not that the object is only to aid him who “is cast unmeritedly into a felon’s cell.” It is for our courts of justice to decide this matter. Tell me not that nothing is proposed to be

done which is incompatible with the claims of justice. This is all true: nothing else is proposed. If such were the case, the Order would not be allowed to exist a day. That State would be corrupt, indeed, that would grant a charter to a body of men, proposing, as their object, the protection of the guilty. Was there ever a society, claiming the patronage of the community, that avowed such an object as this? We are not speaking of what they propose to do, but we are speaking of what is likely to be the result where a number of individuals secretly combine for the purpose of extending their sympathy and aid to each other, not only when laid on beds of sickness, but when cast into a felon's cell. It is unnecessary for us to suppose that any evil design is entertained by those who form themselves into a secret society, having this as one object in view. The question is, are there not considerations which, even unconsciously to the members of such combinations, will be likely to operate on their minds in the way of leading them to pursue such a course in relation to the culprit as would be inconsistent with the supremacy of the law,

and the assertion and vindication of the rights of justice.

We go still further, and assert that such a society is, in its own nature, liable to operate prejudicially to the laws and liberties of a country in proportion to the extent to which it may prevail. Just think of a vast multitude of persons being associated together by solemn vows and pledges, and all acting under one Head directing and controlling the whole, and that, too, by a system of operations which is concealed from every human eye but their own. Look at the representations which the author of the Manual gives us of his Order on page 51. "That band,"— he remarks, "of five brethren in Baltimore, one-third of a century ago, has grown into a mighty army, has overspread the land with its lodges and encampments."* Think of

* At the session in April, 1826, the title of *Grand-Sire* of the Grand-Lodge of the United States was suggested, and in 1828 the Constitution was revised and this title confirmed. From this time the Grand Lodge has increased in importance, and in the number of Odd-Fellows within its jurisdiction, until there are under its control 32 Grand Lodges, 2,647 subordinates, 27 Grand and 524 Subordinate Encampments (numbering 21,000

this! We have, then, in these United States a "mighty army," an army which has "over-spread the land." And remember too that they are all working in secret, and working too with efficiency, for, on page 85, he calls it a "wide-spread and efficient organization." Now we put it to you, my friends, as candid men, whether it is compatible with the public interests that such an army as this should be fostered in our country. In times of political excitement, when a spirit of defiance to the laws and authorities of the land would be abroad, how naturally would this spirit find its way into the Order. What powerful temptations would such a "wide-spread and efficient organization" present to ambitious men of popular manners, and known to be devotedly attached to the Order, to carry out their purposes against the liberties or laws of the country. What an excellent opportunity would it afford to such men to ope-

Patriarchs,) comprising a membership of *one hundred and ninety thousand*, which is represented in the Grand Lodge of the United States by ninety-four votes; there being sixty-one from the Grand Lodges and thirty-three from the Grand Encampments.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book.*

rate with power—a power unrestrained by a fear of detection?

Perhaps it may be said that “the principles of universal friendship, philanthropy and benevolence,” upon which “the Order is based,” would be an effectual security against such a liability. Far from it. Nothing could be more easy than for revolutionary schemes to be advocated on the ground of such principles. In fact, these are the very principles which conspirators against the public weal, and aspirants for political power, are accustomed to make the basis of their claims to public favour. Allow me to read you a paragraph which appeared in the *Ledger* of last week, (March 31st):

“A NEW SECRET ASSOCIATION.—During the late trial of Archibald Leaman and Walter Barnes, on a charge of burglary, in the Lorain county Common Pleas, Ohio, the existence of a *Secret Society* was disclosed, the designs and tendency of which, one or two extracts from its preamble and constitution will sufficiently explain. In the first pledge the member binds himself to secrecy, under a pledge of his ‘goods and chattels, lands

and tenements, and his *life* and body.' The preamble recites that 'Whereas, all governments are instituted and controlled for the *sole purpose* to aid the learned against the unlearned, the strong against the weak,' &c., &c. Pledge the second contains the following clause: 'I pledge further, that I will *disregard* all State or National Law that has a tendency, or will even permit the designing knave to rob the honest or unsuspecting, and as my influence shall be against the wealth of the aristocrat, so it shall be in favour of the labouring poor.' This communion of plunderers, the germ of which was thus brought to light in Lorain county, was to have branches in every State of the Union. It is said that a gentleman who has been a Representative in the Ohio Legislature was at the head of the band in this State, (Ohio.)"

Here, you see, was a secret society organized, professedly, to protect the weak against the strong, and the poor against the rich. How benevolent, how philanthropic such an institution! and yet it was nothing but "a communion of plunderers." Let us not be misunderstood. We are not drawing a com-

parison between this society and the one under consideration. You will bear in mind the object for which we have made this extract. It is simply for the purpose of showing that the most nefarious designs are often carried on, professedly in the prosecution of a good object, and under the operation of right principles, and, consequently, that the object which the Society of Odd-Fellows proposes, and the principles which it professes, do not afford a sufficient guarantee that its tendency will be for the public good, so long as its operations are concealed under the veil of secrecy.

Our position is, that such a society is, in its own nature, liable to be employed as an instrument of evil. We see nothing belonging to this society, unless it be the professions which it makes, that would guard it against being so employed. On the contrary, such a liability may be fairly inferred from the vast power possessed by the Grand Lodge over all the Lodges in the United States. According to Article 1st of the Constitution, "To it, (that is the Grand Lodge of the United States,) belongs the

power to regulate and control the work of the Order, and the several degrees belonging thereto; and to fix and determine the customs, in regard to all things, which concern Odd-Fellowship. It has inherent power to establish Lodges or Encampments in foreign countries* where no Grand Lodge and Grand Encampment exists. Such Lodges and Encampments shall work by virtue of a warrant granted by this Lodge." According to Article 3, entitled "Subordinate Lodges," "they have no legislative power whatever, except to make By-Laws for their own internal government. They must receive with respect all communications emanating from their superiors. They have no authority to ask advice or counsel from any other quarter than the Grand Lodge by which they are governed; nor can they (see how they are watched!) lawfully enter into correspondence with each other without the consent and approval of the Grand Lodges." Did you ever

* There is a Lodge in HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands. There is a Grand Lodge in BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, instituted a few years since by the Grand Lodge of the United States.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book, page 265.*

know of a more complete state of submission than that to which the subordinate Lodges are reduced? In reflecting upon it our thoughts have often recurred to the system of espionage established by the masters of the south over their slaves.

We ask you now, my hearers, to look at this spirit of submission enjoined by the Order upon the Subordinate Lodges, and at the original and exclusive power which the Constitution gives to the Grand Lodge of the United States. Take this feature in connexion with others to which we have directed your attention, and then say whether such an institution is not peculiarly fitted to work great mischief upon the laws and liberties of the country when an occasion should arise.

But let us not leave out of view, while considering the liabilities of the Order in this respect, the important consideration that, even should there be any thing either in the constitution or government of the Order which, in the view of some, would present a sufficient safeguard against the evil of which we have been speaking, this safeguard may very easily be removed. The author of the Ma-

nual expressly says, "Its form of government has gone through great and almost total changes, and may be as greatly changed again." If it has, according to the confession of this author, undergone such great changes as to its government, is it not reasonable to suppose that it may, in times of political excitement, undergo such changes as will make it, in its entire working, an engine of evil and a hot-bed of treason and stratagems? We leave this matter, my hearers, to your serious consideration. We leave it to you, as American citizens, having the interests and honour of your country at heart, and anxious to retain for yourselves and transmit to your children the civil and religious institutions which the God of heaven has vouchsafed to us, and to secure which the good and the great pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honour. Let me say, (and I do it with no unkind feeling to any member of the Order,) that a deliberate consideration of the whole subject has produced, in my mind, a deep and settled conviction that the existence of such a "mighty army," capable of being multiplied to any extent,

and operating throughout the whole country, and in *foreign* countries too, under an impenetrable veil of secrecy and controlled by an irresponsible head, is destined, if not checked by the wisdom and patriotism of the community, to work most disastrously to the interests of our beloved country.

Suppose, however, we admit that this particular society should never be employed as an instrument for accomplishing the purposes of which we have been speaking. Do we not, by a connexion with it, give our countenance to the principle of secret associations? And in doing so are we not giving our countenance to *all* secret associations? Surely, we thereby express our approbation of the principle. And is there any one so blind as not to be able to see that, under the sanction of our authority and the approbation of the community of which we form a part, the most wicked and treasonable associations may be established? Are there not, in almost every community, sufficient material for the organization of such an association? Who knows that there are not such among us? Who knows that such is not the cha-

racter of some of those societies, notices of which are appearing in the papers almost every day, and which have become so numerous that the initial letters of their names seem almost to have exhausted the alphabet. We say—who knows that this is not the case? And are you not, as Odd-Fellows, giving your countenance to that very principle of secrecy which is their only protection against the retribution of an outraged and indignant community. If you have a right to form one secret society, I have surely an equal right, if I can succeed in persuading others to unite with me, to form another. I have, perhaps you will reply, if I have a good object in view. In answer to this I have only to say that, if I intended to form the most nefarious society that ever existed, and expected to be tolerated in the community, I most certainly would emblazon upon its banner “Friendship, Philanthropy and Beneficence.” These words, or some of a similar import, should be made to stand out in strong and bold relief. How then, I ask again, would you, after having recognised the principle of secret societies, prevent

the formation and continuance of the most wicked and treasonable associations—such as the one of which we have read you an account in this Lecture. We affirm, therefore, that whatever may be the purity of your motives as Odd-Fellows, and however benevolent may be the operations of your society, you are, by your connexion with it, giving countenance to a principle most dangerous and destructive in its tendencies. I call upon you, therefore, as patriots, to unite with me in lifting up a testimony against all such societies. I appeal to your love of country, as American citizens, to do what you can to arrest the progress of this growing evil. Shall this appeal be made in vain?

10. *We object to this society, because it usurps the place of the church.* The tendency of its very existence and operations is to diminish that sense of the importance of the church, as a divinely authorized society, which all who are favoured with divine revelation are bound to cherish.

Let it be here remarked, that next to the Saviour himself, there is nothing for which, as a Christian, I am bound to cherish so

ardent and devoted an attachment as the Church of God. Surely I cannot love too dearly, and I cannot be too jealous of the honour of that for which the Son of God gave his own precious blood, and which He himself has exalted to the relation of being his own spouse, and over whose interests he watches with all the care of a most tender and affectionate Husband. The Church of God is my spiritual mother as Jesus is my Spiritual Father, and, as one of her children, if my feelings and affections for her are such as they ought to be, I should be ever ready to say with one of her sons of old, “If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I *prefer not thee above my chief joy.*” Such I have a right to take for granted are the affectionate regards which every true child of Zion entertains for the Church of the living God. To such, the remarks which I am about to make, must be regarded as more particularly addressed. They, and they only, are capable of appreciating this objection. Of course it will be a very small objection with those who care not for the church and her ordinances.

We say, then, that this society usurps the place of the church, and that its influence is adverse to her interests. In the first place, look at *the object* which it proposes to itself.* This object, as declared in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the United States, is the promotion of the "eternal principles of universal friendship, philanthropy and beneficence." Is not this, in subordination to his own glory, the object for which the great God has established his church in the world? "Friendship, Love, and Truth," the author of the Manual says, on page 100, "are not only a safeguard, but a remedy for all the social and moral evils that afflict our race." This remark he makes, in giving instructions to persons in reference to their "initiation." On the same page, he has intimated to the initiated that these "principles of fraternity,"—principles, a knowledge of which is to be acquired in the lodge, will, if properly applied, "enlighten and liberate his own soul,

* We are simply a society for mutual improvement in virtue, *religion*, and sound morals; and for the practice of a judicious, well-directed, and efficient charity.—*Odd-Fellow's Text Book, page 14.*

then enlighten the darkness and break the bonds of others, and so hasten the coming of that age when this Aceldama shall be a blossoming paradise, and clashing interests and jarring strifes give place to a universal union of all energies for the general good to a community of happiness and peace." Now, leaving out of view the important consideration that the influence of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, in the restoration of fallen man, is not taken into the account, you will perceive that the object is no less extensive and comprehensive than the one for which the Church of God has been instituted.

Nor is it simply as auxiliary to the church in the promotion of this object, that this society has been organized. Not only does the author of the Manual tell Odd-Fellows, on page 286, that they are "co-workers with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles," in hastening the coming of that period, "when the warrior's spear shall be broken, and his sword rest within its scabbard, and the united thoughts and energies of man be given to the service of humanity, in the cultivation of fraternal love," &c.—not only does he claim for Odd-

Fellowship an instrumentality in bringing about this blessed consummation—not only does he tell the “Past Vice Grand,” on page 259, that “in truth there is no inapt resemblance between his humble duties and those of Moses at Sinai,” as they “both delivered the law, obligation, and charge of their office faithfully, and bound those under instruction to order and obedience”—not only does he thus identify this Order with the Church of God, in the great work of restoring man to his primeval state; but, on page 177, he tells those who have taken the Degree of Rebecca, that, “having become one with them and of them, in that fellowship, and assumed their obligations, they can better demonstrate to them that our greatest duty and highest aim is the promotion of a practical and loving fraternity of mankind.”

Now let us suppose those to whom these words are addressed, to be members of the church; and have we not it here plainly declared, that in Odd-Fellowship we have a better demonstration of the highest aims and duties of life, than is to be found in the Church of God? If this be so, then I ask, what is

the use of the church? If there is another organization that can better demonstrate our greatest duty and our highest aim, surely we had better all throw up our connexion with the Church, and at once become Odd-Fellows. The glory of God and the interests of humanity demand that our exertions and our resources should be directed to increase the moral power and efficiency of this *superior* organization.

But not only do they propose to accomplish the object, or at least one great object for which the Church of God has been established in our world; but in order to impart to it something of that sacred character which belongs to the church, and thereby secure to themselves that power which the church possesses as a society, addressing herself to the religionism of man's nature, they have borrowed, or rather stolen, almost every part of that holy drapery with which her glorious Head and Lawgiver has from time to time arrayed her, that she might accomplish the high purposes contemplated in her organization. In reading the Manual, one cannot but be impressed with the fact that the founders

of this society have kept steadily in view an outward assimilation of their Order to the church, as if indeed to impress the minds of its members with the conviction that a connexion with it would answer every purpose which could be attained by a connexion with the church. What have we in the church for which this society has not its counterpart? Have we forms in the church? They have theirs: throughout the Manual there is constant reference to their "rituals and ceremonies." Indeed, they constitute an essential part of the system. To all these there is attached a significance.

On page 102, the author of the Manual says to his brother Odd-Fellow: "The forms through which you have passed, are not what they seem to many. Under each act and emblem, there is a deep significance." Again, on page 56, in speaking of their decorations, emblems, and forms, he says: "The light shed on their meaning, as we advance in Odd-Fellowship, and their novel applications to impress on our minds important principles and precepts, render them peculiarly pleasing and highly useful. The thoughtful Odd-Fel-

low is continually reminded by them of important duties to God and man." On page 91, he tells those who are admitted to "keep their mind attentive to the ceremonial, that they may clearly understand its import." On page 98, he speaks of "rites which shall teach the initiated his present condition as a social being."*

You will perceive from these quotations, that this society claims to have a ritual or system of ceremonies for the instruction of its members.

But this is not all. To give to the Order a character as sacred as possible, they have taken the most of their rites and ceremonies from those which have at one time or other belonged to the Church of God. In speaking of those which belonged to the Order of Odd-Fellows, in common with other secret societies, the author of the Manual says, on page 96: "An investigation would show us that these rites and ceremonies were originally of a religious character, copied, in the first in-

* Odd-Fellowship has instituted solemn ceremonies, ordained frequent meetings, and formed a language of signs.—*Odd-Fellow's Text-Book, page 40.*

stance, from a divine institution." We wish you, my hearers, to bear this distinctly in mind, for it has an important bearing upon the point which we are endeavouring to establish. We see plainly in all this, an effort to assimilate this society as much as possible to the church. In accordance with this statement, they have introduced into their system of emblems, "the Lamb," which, the author of the Manual says, "forcibly reminds us of the Paschal Lamb, under the law, and of Christ the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." In addition to this, we have the "rod of Moses," the "brazen serpent," "Aaron's budded rod," "the breast plate," "the tables of the law," "the altar of incense," "the ark of the covenant," with the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat, &c. &c. Now what do all these things indicate? Do they not plainly indicate a design on the part of the framers of this Order, to give, as far as possible, an ecclesiastical character to this institution?

A more particular examination will present still further evidence of this fact. They have their forms of prayer, and among these you

will find the 122d Psalm, which is to be recited, with responses, in the manner observed in the Episcopal Church. In order to complete the responses, they have found it necessary to make one at the termination of the Psalm, which response is in these words: "So may it be." That Psalm is used by them, according to the Manual, on the occasion of the dedication of an Odd-Fellows' hall, or lodge-room. As members of the Church of Christ, you are doubtless familiar with that Psalm. You know that it was designed to express the excellence of the Church of God, and the delight experienced by the true believer in attending upon its ordinances, and the ardent desire which he cherishes for its prosperity. The first verse of it reads as follows: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Yet this is the Psalm which is recited by Odd-Fellows upon the occasion of *the dedication of their halls and lodges!* Have we not here, I ask you, a virtual and implicit, if not a formal and express identification of this organization with the church? Was not the selection of this Psalm most obviously designed to

transfer to the lodge-room the thoughts, feelings, and affections of the Christian, which cluster around the sanctuary, the place which he is there declared to place above his chief joy.

Nor is this all. Not only have we prayers and recitations, but in connexion with these, songs and odes, which are employed as in the church—songs and odes, celebrating the praises, not of the great God, but of the Order of Odd-Fellowship.

You may upon a closer examination see a still more striking resemblance. As the church has her festival, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, so the Order has its "festivals." As the church has its baptism, so the Order has its baptisms. Water is sprinkled in the name of Friendship at the dedication of an Odd-Fellow's Hall, and it is poured in the name of Friendship when laying the corner stone of a church.

Now we ask you as Christians—as those who profess to love the blood-bought and blood-washed church of the Son of God, if there be not in all these arrangements a most evident design to usurp the place of this divinely au-

thorized institution? Here we see an institution founded by the God of heaven, for the regeneration and elevation of man, but alongside of it we behold another, possessing "forms," "rituals," and "ceremonies," claiming to be "a means of edification in righteousness, truth, and humanity," according to the language of the Manual (page 357.)

If we take a view of the officers which belong to this "living temple," as it is called, we shall find among these officers those who are invested with a sacred character. Here is a chaplain whose duty it is "to open and close the lodge with appointed prayers, and to officiate at the funeral of a brother, and on other public occasions." Look at this matter, my hearers. Here is a man formally invested by a voluntary society to perform, at the grave of a departed fellow being, those duties which are assigned by all others to the minister of God. Perhaps it may be said, that it is only designed that he should officiate in cases where a minister cannot be obtained. It matters not; his very appointment in a Christian community shows that the society

proposes that their institution should operate in the same way and for the same object as God's institution. It is not, however, the fact that these chaplains do not officiate except in those cases where an ordained minister of the gospel cannot be obtained, or has not been actually employed; we have had ocular and auricular demonstration to the contrary. Prayers have been offered up at the grave of the departed by the chaplain, with his white sash, after the minister of God has been in their presence engaged in the usual ceremonies.

But not only have they their chaplains, but their patriarchs, and their messengers, and their priests, and their high priests. Yes; here is to be seen the "high priest," with his "breastplate, within a triangle," and "standing within the tent behind the altar." According to the Manual, page 267, "His *duties* are to offer up the prescribed prayers at opening, closing, and in conferring the degrees; to instruct candidates and members in the Lectures, &c."

We appeal to you then, my hearers, as candid Christian men, have we not presented

proof that should satisfy every reasonable person, that this Order wears the livery of the church of God?—that it has appropriated to itself those divine habiliments with which her ever living Lord and glorious King has invested her? We say, then, that it is in the very design of its organization and machinery a rival of the church of God. And, therefore, just in so far as it prevails in the world, will this divine institution be compelled to stand in the back ground. It is impossible, in the very nature of things, that they can both flourish in the same community, proposing, in a great measure, the accomplishment of the same end. He who is a good Odd-Fellow, cannot be a good member of the church. The author of the Manual tells us, on page 98, That the members of this Order “have vowed to devote their lives to fraternity in Odd-Fellowship.” How, then, can they set the church above their chief joy? The same author tells us, on page 185, (and in order that it may awaken our attention and deeply impress our hearts, he has expressed it in italics,) “Nothing is so painful to the feelings of faithful Odd-Fellows,

as to see the requirements of the institution profaned and trodden under foot." Mark, my hearers, such language as this, and then tell me whether membership in this Order is consistent with membership in the church of God. Your brother Odd-Fellow may be a member of the church, and he may treat with contempt its holy mysteries and its solemn ceremonies; he may turn his back upon its assemblies, and disregard its divine lessons, but your feelings as an Odd-Fellow in the contemplation of such conduct, are not so painful as they would be, if you were to see the "requirements" of your favourite institution "profaned and trodden under foot;" for "nothing" is so painful as this to the feelings of faithful Odd-Fellows. Is such a man worthy of membership in the church of God? No; his well springs are not in her. He prefers not Jerusalem above his chief joy.

Look, for instance, at the time which this society requires its members to spend in its service, and see whether its claims in this respect are consistent with the faithful discharge of their duties as church members.

On page 35, of the Manual, we are told that "prior to 1821, degrees were conferred, as in Great Britain, on Sundays, in the Lodge room, and the act was called delivering Lectures." Could a society which would call its members together on the Sabbath for the purpose of attending to certain ceremonies, cherish a proper regard for the claims of the church and her divinely appointed institutions? We may be told, that it is not so now in this country. True, but why? The reason is obvious. It has been found to be inconsistent with the interests of the society thus to set itself in direct opposition to the claims of the church, and to treat with open contempt the feeling of regard for the Holy Sabbath, which, to some degree, pervades the entire community. It is enough for us to know, that it was formerly the custom of the society to meet on this day, and from what has been, we may learn what will be, whenever it may be found expedient. Let Odd-Fellowship become more extensively prevalent, and let this custom be again introduced—let the holy hours of this day of sacred rest be devoted to the interests of this

secret society, and then the question will be, what it should now be,—The Order, or the church?

But leaving the Sabbath out of view, and leaving out of view also the time which must necessarily be spent in attending to the outdoor duties of the Order, we would ask whether the time required to be spent in the Lodge room through the week, is not likely to interfere with that attendance upon the meetings of the church, which is expected of her members? The author of the Manual, in speaking, on page 207, of the "duties and deportment of Odd-Fellows," says, (for the purpose of showing them that the time required is such as they can afford) "Two, or at most three, evenings a week to attend Subordinate and Degree Lodge and Encampment are *usually* sufficient." The word usually is in italics, implying that it is sometimes necessary to give a more frequent attendance. Here we again appeal to you, as Christians, as those who profess to love the church, whether an attendance upon its evening prayer meetings is to be expected of those who are required to spend two or three

evenings in the week, and sometimes more, in the Lodge room? What is your answer? What else can it be but a direct negative? When this society puts forth such claims upon the time of its members, it makes no allowance for the claims of the church, to say nothing of those of the family. No; every thing must be made to yield to the Order. The duties which spring from the tenderest and holiest relations of life, must be sacrificed to its interests. That Odd-Fellows should prefer the courts of God's house to the hidden assemblies of their "temple," contains in it a reflection so injurious upon their character, that it is not for one moment to be entertained. Am I speaking the language of sober truth in making this disclaimer on their behalf? Judge for yourselves when you hear the following remark of the author of the Manual, on page 196,—"We hope and trust brothers have not found other places, apart from their families, where they can spend their evenings more agreeably than among their brothers in the Lodge room. We would not insinuate such a thing." Such a thing *we* shall not insinuate, for we

fear, alas! there is but little ground for it; yet we would say, that as the professed followers of Jesus, there *are* other places where they ought to spend their evenings more agreeably.

Would that we had before us the pastors of the several congregations in this district, and had the opportunity afforded us for so doing, we would call them up as witnesses in regard to this matter. We would make our appeal to them and ask them whether they did not, as a general thing, discover a lessening of their attachment to the church and her institutions in those of their members who connected themselves with this Order, from the time in which such connexion was formed. We would ask them whether they did not witness a diminution of interest on their part in the services of the sanctuary—in many cases a gradual drawing off from the house of God, until their presence there rather than their absence, would attract the notice of those who are accustomed to meet within its walls. Whatever you may think, my hearers, we have little doubt that the almost universal response to such an inquiry

would be—Alas! it is even so. The Order has taken that place in their affections which the church once occupied. They have, in the language of the Manual, “vowed to devote their lives to fraternity in Odd-Fellowship,” and therefore around its Lodges linger the warmest sympathies of their hearts. My hearers, we entreat you to test this matter for yourselves. Go to your pastor and ask *him* whether Odd-Fellowship, with all the claims which it has put forth, has strengthened his hands in his efforts as a minister of Jesus to do good to the souls of men. We feel almost willing to submit the whole question to the issue of such a trial.

Here we leave the matter. As we have before intimated, we are fully aware that there is a class, and certainly a very large class, upon whose minds the considerations which we have presented, under this last objection, will not fall with the weight of a feather, however true and well founded they may be. The Church! What care they for the church? That name awakens in their hearts no emotions, unless it be those of aversion. It calls not up to their remem-

brance, ordinances that have proved to them as they have done to others, well springs of sweetest consolation in this vale of tears. It associates not with it the recollection of joys that have been to them an antepast of the delights of that better land,

"Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet,
While the songs of salvation unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

No, no; there are many, alas! how many, in whose hearts the thoughts of Zion awaken no such feelings. From such we expect no sympathy. We ask it not. But we throw ourselves upon the religious sensibilities of the *Christian* community, assured that if they will consult their own experience and observation, they will not want evidence that our objection is well founded,—that the Order, so far from proving a handmaid to the church, has tended rather to mar her purity, weaken her energies, and retard her progress.

LECTURE V.

THE object of my last lecture was to show you, my hearers, that the Order of Odd-Fellows is an organization which in its own nature is liable to operate injuriously to the rights and interests of the community, and that it usurps the place of the church and in its influence is adverse to her prosperity. How far we succeeded in establishing the objections which are there offered against the Order is known to those of you who may have been present on that occasion. We submitted these objections to your judgments, trusting that you would as patriots and as Christians give them that attention and consideration which their importance demands. We solicit the same attention and consideration for those which we propose to bring forward this evening.

(11.) *We object to the Order that the religion which it incorporates into its system is a*

Christless religion, and consequently that the society is a Christless society. In order that the force of the objection may be duly felt and appreciated, it is necessary for you to bear in mind that the Order addresses itself to the religious principle. Upon this principle it is designed to operate as well as upon any other principle of our nature. Man is a religious being, and that system of operations which addresses itself to the religionism of his nature, of course secures to itself an advantage which otherwise it would not possess. Of this advantage the Order whose merits we are discussing has sought to avail itself. It forms a part of the complicated machinery which it has set in motion. Proof of this fact need scarcely be adduced for the sake of those of you who may have followed us in our preceding remarks. Nothing can be plainer from an examination of the constitution, and the several parts of the system itself, and the various appliances which it employs, than that it is designed to operate upon man as a religious, as well as a social and sentient being. Its "rituals," "ceremonies," "emblems," and "officers," present,

most clearly and directly, the religious idea before the mind.

Now this being admitted, as it unquestionably must be admitted, it is surely right and proper that we should inquire into the character of that religion which animates and controls the organization of Odd-Fellowship.

Whatever inappropriateness to our calling there may have been thought to have been in the discussion of other parts of the system, surely this part will be regarded by you all as presenting to a Christian minister a legitimate subject of inquiry. Let us then inquire into the religion of this order. It is denominated in the manual a "living Temple," let us look at the kind of deity, at whose shrine the worshippers in this temple present their offerings. Is it the Deity of the Bible, —of the Christian? We say it is not. The God of the Bible and of the Christian is a God in Christ. To Odd-Fellowship, however, this God is an "unknown God." The name of Jesus is no more recognised within the walls of the Lodge than if it were a heathen temple. This we assert without hesitation, and without the fear of successful contradic-

tion. The religious principles upon which it is based are those of Deism. Beyond these, as a society, it does not go. We do not say that there are no Christians belonging to the Order. But we say that the religion which the Order has introduced into its system is not Christianity, but Deism. It requires a religious belief on the part of its members; but what is that belief? It is this, and nothing more than this, (as may be seen by referring to the 48th page of the "Digest of Laws,") "a belief in a Supreme Being, the Creator and Preserver of the Universe." The law declares that he must be a believer thus far, and here the requisitions of the law end.

That the whole system of their operations is based upon, and controlled by this principle, notwithstanding occasional appearances to the contrary, is asserted in so many words by the author of the Manual. In speaking of the principle of toleration, as it enters into Odd-Fellowship he tells us (p. 285-6) that the members of this Order "have left their prejudices at the door, and mingle in one circle of brotherhood, harmony, and love." And what think you,

my Christian hearers, are these prejudices? Yes, these *prejudices!* as they are called by the reverend author of the manual. Listen to the words which immediately follow those we have just quoted. They are these: "The descendants of Abraham, the diverse followers of Jesus, the Pariahs of the stricter sects, here gather round the same altar, as one family, manifesting no differences of creed or worship, and discord and contention are forgotten in works of humanity and peace." Here are some of the prejudices which you must leave at the door of this "living Temple." You must first as an Odd-Fellow lay aside every thing which distinguishes you from a Jew. But this is not enough; you must go still further, and lay aside every thing that distinguishes you from a Pariah of the stricter sect, that is, a pagan Hindoo. With these you must meet around the same altar, on the principle, says the author of the Manual, of "toleration in opinions wherein we differ. " What a beautiful exhibition of harmony! No wonder that the author of the Manual became so enraptured with it as to exclaim, "Such scenes lead the lover of

God and of humanity to sigh, Oh when shall the warrior's spear be broken, and his sword rest within its scabbard, and the united thoughts and energies of man be given to the service of humanity, in the cultivation of fraternal love, justice, mercy, and true righteousness—to the service of God, in seeking to know him better, to love him more, and to serve and obey him in all things!"

This, my hearers, is the way in which Odd-Fellowship teaches us to serve God. Do such teachings accord with those of the Bible? Yes; if we are to believe the author of the Manual, the requisitions of Odd-Fellowship and the Bible are identical. The "Tables of the Law" constitute one of the emblems of the "Golden Rule Degree," and according to this authority this emblem has been selected because it "represents the great common basis of the three great religions of the world, (Judaism, Christianity, and Mahomedanism,) which have the worship of the one only living and true God, for their object." (p. 287.) Mahomedanism affords a beautiful illustration of the requisitions of the divine law!

In order that this matter may be clearly tested, let us examine the forms of prayer which belong to the Order—let us look at the liturgy adopted by those who worship in this “living temple.” Surely, if the name of our blessed Redeemer would be recognised any where in the system, we might expect to find its recognition there. But, will you find it there? No, we have read every prayer contained in the book, and of these there is not a few, and we have yet to see among the numerous collection any distinct reference to the person and work of our glorious Mediator. You may look into the prayers which are made at the dedication of their halls, at the dedication of churches, and at the burial of the dead, as well as those which are prescribed to be observed at the opening and closing of the Lodge, and you will not find among all these that Name which is above every name. We have the book, and we shall very cheerfully afford any one an opportunity who is willing to undertake the task of finding in it a single petition in the name of our exalted Immanuel. No Odd-Fellow, as such, can pray in the name of

Jesus. If a believer in Jesus, he has to "leave" his faith, as one of his "prejudices," at the door, and "mingle" with Jews and Pariahs "in one circle of brotherhood, harmony, and love," and with them "gather round the same altar, as one family." So carefully is this idea regarded in the religious observances of the order, that in referring to prayer the Object to whom that prayer is addressed is always spoken of simply as "the Supreme Ruler of the Universe."

In farther illustration and confirmation of this fact, allow me to introduce here a conversation which took place between two ministers of the gospel, in reference to the matter now under discussion. Let me here state that this conversation is given by me as furnished by one of the parties referred to, and who holds himself responsible for the correctness of the statement, should it be publicly called in question. This statement is as follows.

"Some years ago the Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of the State of Maryland of the I. O. O. F., himself a minister of the gospel, said to a brother minister with whom

he was spending the night at a friend's house; 'Why don't you join the Odd-Fellows? It would be a great advantage to you.' To which his friend replied, 'I do not join them, because my obligations, as a Christian, forbid my becoming an Odd-Fellow.' 'O no,' said the Chaplain, 'there is nothing in Odd-Fellowship which interferes with any man's religion. It expressly declares that nothing shall be imposed upon you that will interfere with your duty to God or your country. Besides, it is all founded upon the Bible, and if a man will live up to the rules of the Order, he must be a Christian.' 'I have heard the same assertions made by others,' said his friend, 'and doubt not but they were sincere in saying so, as I believe that you are also; but after a little investigation, it appeared to my mind that Odd-Fellowship involved a rejection of Christ, and that I could not be an Odd-Fellow, and maintain unimpaired my allegiance to Christ. In short, I cannot be an Odd-Fellow and a Christian.' 'Really,' said the chaplain, 'you startle me; for if you cannot be an Odd-Fellow and a Christian, neither can I or any body else;

and yet I am an Odd-Fellow, and I think I am a Christian also. I should like you to explain yourself.' 'That I will do very freely and frankly,' said his friend; 'but first I would observe, that I am not your judge: nor do I set up my sentiments upon this subject as the standard for other men's consciences. I judge for myself, and not for another; hence I said that it appeared to my mind that Odd-Fellowship involves a rejection of Christ: for as an Odd-Fellow, I could not acknowledge Christ as mediator between God and man, nor use the name of Christ in addressing the Father.' 'O, but you are entirely mistaken,' said the chaplain; 'for when I pray in the lodge, I always use the name of Christ, and no one finds any fault with it.' 'That may be,' replied his friend; 'and when you do so, it is on your own individual responsibility; and as your Order professes to embrace men of every creed and sect, another might use the name of the Virgin Mary, or Mahomet, and no fault be found with them; for Odd-Fellowship interferes not with any man's religion, whatever it may be. But as you would not allow that Odd-Fellowship acknowledges the false

prophet, because in the lodge a Mohammedan prayed to Allah in his name; so you cannot plead that Odd-Fellowship acknowledges Christ, because in the lodge you pray to the Father in his name. Odd-Fellowship has its own religious rites and ceremonies, from which I gather its creed; and from these the name of Christ is purposely excluded. In this respect, as well as in some others, it resembles Free Masonry; and in an approved work on Free Masonry, written and compiled by Joseph R. Chandler, (one of the Order,) of Philadelphia, there is a chapter on religion, which is nothing more nor less than a statement of Deism. He gives also a form of prayer which he says was anciently used in the lodges, and in which the favour of God is supplicated by the sorrows of Adam; by the blood of Abel, and by the righteousness of Noah; but not a word about Christ. I know not whether Odd-Fellows ever had *anciently* any such blasphemous form in use as the above, which substitutes other mediators in the place of Christ, but I know that, like Free Masonry, it does purposely exclude the mediation of Christ.' The chaplain was somewhat disconcerted, but

said, ‘That in this country, nearly all who united with the Order were Christians, and that the feature in the religious ceremonies adverted to was obsolete; that Odd-Fellows now in this country universally acknowledged Christ as their Mediator and Saviour.’ ‘Well,’ said his friend, ‘it will be time enough for me to take into consideration the propriety of joining the Order, when I am furnished with evidence that its principles and practice are made conformable to Scripture.’

“A few years afterwards these brethren spent an evening together under similar circumstances; and in the course of conversation, the chaplain remarked to the other: ‘You no doubt remember what was said by yourself in relation to Odd-Fellowship, in a conversation I had with you about two years ago.’ ‘Yes,’ said his friend; ‘What of it?’ ‘Well,’ said the chaplain, ‘I find it to be too true. Last year we held a convention of the Grand Lodge of Maryland in the city of Baltimore; and as I was chaplain, I was made chairman of the committee on religious rites and ceremonies; and I said to myself, now is the time to make them conform to the Chris-

tian religion. So I carefully revised them, and inserted the name of Christ in them all; but to my utter amazement, the committee, notwithstanding I strongly urged the matter on various considerations, voted against it to a man. And what surprised me more than all was, that some, if not all of the committee, were professed Christians. When I was asked in convention for a report on religious rites and ceremonies, I told them that I had none to make, as all the committee disagreed with me. Some one said, bring it in as a minority report. I replied that I would do so, only I was afraid it would share the same fate in convention it had done in committee, which would only make the matter worse.'"

Such is the statement with which we have been furnished from a respectable and responsible source. And does it not speak for itself? Does it not show us most conclusively that the non-appearance of the name of Christ in the prayers of the Order, is the result of design. Now look at this matter, my hearers, as Christians. You cannot put it away from you. I hold it up to you in the name of my great Master, and demand for it your serious

attention. Jesus once said to his disciples, "What think ye of Christ?" To you I say, what think ye, as Christians, of that committee, who, in their official capacity as Odd-Fellows, formally and deliberately blotted out that name from their prayers? Wherein, I ask you, did their conduct differ from those who cried out, "Away with him! away with him?" If we may put away Jesus from our prayers, when may we not put him away? If we have no need for him in presenting ourselves before the throne of infinite Majesty, when, O when, do we need him? And yet, if the system of Odd-Fellowship be right, the conduct of that committee was right. As Odd-Fellows, they could do nothing else. With all due deference, they knew their duty better than their reverend chairman; and no man can consult their books without saying so. What right had they to make a Christian prayer, to be offered upon an "altar," around which the "descendants of Abraham, the diverse followers of Jesus, and the Pariahs of the stricter sects, gather as one family, manifesting no differences of creed and worship?" This worthy chaplain had given the system,

we apprehend, but a very partial examination before entering the Order, (as we have reason to believe is the case with not a few,) else he would not have thought of making such a proposition in committee. It seems that when he prayed in the lodge, he always used the name of Christ. Had he, however, consulted the authorities, he would have found that he was thereby taking an undue liberty.

What says the 23d Article of the By-Laws of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the United States? It reads as follows: "All State, District, and Territorial Grand Lodges and Grand Encampments, shall enforce upon their Subordinates a strict adherence to the work of the Order, according to the forms furnished by the Grand Lodge of the United States; and shall be held responsible for any irregularities that they may allow under their jurisdiction. They shall neither adopt or use, nor suffer to be adopted or used in their jurisdiction, any other charges, lectures, degrees, *ceremonies*, forms of installation, or regalia, than those prescribed by the Grand Lodge of the United States." From this it is plain that the lodge in which he used the name of

Christ in his prayers, was liable to be called to account for suffering such an irregularity. We think it very questionable whether such an irregularity would even be tolerated now. For this opinion we have the very best reason. The author of the Manual, on page 186, gives us the prayer which he tells us is "offered by the chaplain or brother designated for that purpose;" at the opening of the lodge; and in a foot note he employs the following language: "The prayer here given was adopted by the Grand Lodge of the United States, to prevent the practice of praying peculiar religious opinions, which were offensive to members of the Order in many of our lodges." By "peculiar religious opinions," is evidently meant opinions in which Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, are not agreed; for as we have already shown you, the religion which they hold in common forms the basis of their fraternity. They all gather around the same altar.

Perhaps it may be asked, are not extempore-
rary prayers allowed? We presume they are;
but the author of the Manual tells us in the
same foot note, that "It is also ordered that

on all occasions the *same spirit* as observed in the foregoing, shall be *strictly* followed by the officiating clergyman or chaplain." You perceive then, my hearers, that Christians, in entering this society, cannot carry with them their Christianity, not even to make use of it in their prayers in the lodge-room. And yet there are to be found professing Christians who will, in the face of this clearly established fact, stand up and tell us that a connexion with such a society is perfectly consistent with all the requisitions of the gospel of the grace of God. O! what a sad and humiliating evidence of the low state of religion in the Church of God, when so many of her members can enter into a combination, in which each individual gives an implied pledge that he will lay aside every thing which is peculiar to him as a religious man, except what he can hold in common with the Deist.

What makes the matter, in our opinion, tenfold worse, is that this very society which blots out the name of Jesus from its prayers, makes such a show of regard for the Bible, and has even introduced it as one of its emblems. Something of this kind would seem

to be necessary to secure for it the favour of the Bible-loving portion of the community, while at the same time it would not be offensive to the tastes of others—it having been, as far as Odd-Fellowship is concerned, robbed of that which, in the estimation of the Christian, constitutes its glory. The Deist will not fail to express his admiration of the Bible, and employ it too, viewed simply as a human production. Yes, we have been told by the most uncompromising Deists, that there were a thousand truths in the Scriptures, most beautifully expressed. Shall I, however, as a Christian, be satisfied with such an admission, and shall I enter into a society with those who will make it, forbidding me at the same time, as a member, to make use of it in any other way than simply to draw from it principles which it professes in common with the Koran? Let such an act never be mine!

We have often been asked, where is there any thing in the Bible against Odd-Fellowship? Are those persons who make this inquiry, aware that there is such a passage as this? “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed,

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him." Here is a society professing to be a religious and moral reform society, and yet there is not one thing which it does, or which it can do consistently with the fundamental principles of its organization, in the name of the Lord Jesus. Why, look at it, my hearers. Here is a minister of the gospel. The name of Jesus is upon his lips as he prays in the closet, in the family, in the sanctuary, and on every public occasion. He goes into the lodgeroom; he is called upon, as the mouth of the society, to address the Ruler of the universe. And yet he dare not ask any one of the blessings which he invokes, in the name of this only Mediator between God and man—in the name of Him who has said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me;" and, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, believing, ye shall receive." What think you of this?

My hearers, I call upon you, as professing Christians, seriously to consider this matter, for it is a matter involving interests of infinite moment. By prayer we place ourselves in the presence of a Being of spotless holiness.

ness, and inflexible justice, and almighty power. And shall we who are sinners—we who have violated his law, and exposed ourselves to his everlasting wrath—appear before His “awful throne” without a Mediator? O! let this presumption never be mine! Let me point the steel to the lightnings of heaven, but let me not present a Christless prayer to Him at whose frown the hills smoke, and at whose touch the earth trembles!

(12.) *We object to this society, because a connexion with it is inconsistent with our devotion to the truth and cause of Christ.* We have seen that the religion of this Order is a Christless religion; that the name and authority of Jesus are not recognised, even in the prayers which are there offered; but if we examine the matter more thoroughly, we shall find that no man can co-operate with the society without advancing the cause of error, and that too in some of its worst forms. The author of the Manual says, page 103: “While we exclude all party and sectarian distinctions from our lodges, we require no sacrifice of opinions, no loosening of obligations to church or state, no swerving from principle, no les-

sening of devotion to God." Let us see, my hearers, whether this be so. In the first place we have seen what is meant by "party and sectarian distinctions." Is there no "sacrifice of opinions, no loosening of obligations to church or state, no swerving from principle, no lessening of devotion to God," in the exclusion of Christianity?

But, leaving this out of view, is there no direct countenance given to principles and practices to which all evangelical churches are opposed? Let us see. If you refer to page 348 of the Manual, you will find there given a chapter on what is called the "Ceremony of laying the corner-stone of a church, academy, or other public building." The "form" which the author gives, he tells us, "is provided for occasions in which, as not unfrequently happens, the Order is invited to assist in laying the corner-stone of a public building." In this form we have the address given on such occasions by the N. G.

After some remarks in reference to the benevolent character of the Order, this dignitary says, "Thus it is, that wherever pious hearts seek to raise an altar of praise to the

Father of Spirits . . . there the true Odd-Fellow rejoices to be, aiding and assisting with all the means in his power." He further says, "Our charity is not, as has falsely been asserted, narrow and restricted. In the recesses of our mystic temple, we are taught the duty of universal philanthropy and of an all-embracing charity. Our hearts are, therefore, with you, because they are with the objects you have in view, and with the sentiments by which you are actuated." After this, we have the Christless prayer of the Chaplain. And then, after the reading of the "documents to be placed in the stone," the "N. G. and C. descend to the stone and assist in depositing it in its place in the north-east corner of the building. They will be attended," we are told, "by three brethren, bearing the appropriate vessels." The ceremony observed is this. Water is poured while the N. G. says, "In the name of Friendship I lay this stone, praying," &c. The Chaplain adding, "May God in his mercy so grant it, Amen." Flowers are strewed, the N. G. saying, "In the name of Love I lay this stone, praying," &c. The Chaplain add-

ing, as before, "May God in his mercy so grant it, Amen." Wheat is strewed, the N. G. saying, "In the name of Truth I lay this stone, praying," &c. The Chaplain repeating the same words, "May God in his mercy so grant it, Amen." After these *solemn* ceremonies are over, the N. G. (giving three blows with the gavel) says, "In the name of benevolence and charity, as professed universally by the Order of Odd-Fellows, I lay this stone and fix it in the solid wall, whence may it be no more removed for ever." Then the Chaplain offers a prayer, of which the following are the first two sentences: "Accept, O Almighty Father, the work of our hands and the offering of our hearts. Bless and consecrate this edifice to its noble and praiseworthy purposes." Have we not here, I ask you, a most plain and direct identification of the Order with those who propose the erection of this church? What church? Why any church, according to the language of the N. G., "be the denomination what it may." And what may it not be? It may be a Popish church, a Unitarian church, a Universalist church, a Mormon church, a Jewish church,

a Mohammedan church. According to the very principles upon which the Order is based, they are bound thus to co-operate in its erection—in the language of the N. G., thus to “assist them in laying the cornerstone of the edifice with solemn ceremonies, and thereby impressively devote it to the purposes to which it is to be kept sacred.”

Now, in the view of some, all this may appear to be a beautiful exhibition of liberality. We well know that there are thousands in the community who are ready to denounce any one as a narrow-minded bigot who would utter a syllable in condemnation of the spirit which evinces itself in the transactions of the Order to which we have just referred you. To such we have nothing to say. To the professing Christian, however, we have a word to say. Is the liberality here exhibited the liberality of the gospel? *You* know it is not. *You* know that the charity which the Bible inculcates is a charity that rejoices in the truth—that you are required by the law of Christianity to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints”—that you are warned against giving countenance

to those who subvert the faith of the gospel. Where was the heart more full of love to God and man than the heart of John, the beloved disciple," and yet, hear what he says: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." Listen, again, to the awful words of the Apostle of the Gentiles—a man who devoted all the energies of his mind and body to the welfare of his fellow men. What does he say? This is what he says. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Such was the liberality of John. Such was the liberality of Paul. Such is not the liberality of this society, as evinced in the transactions of which we have just been speaking. Its liberality is a religious libertinism—a liberality which disregards the high and holy

principles of God's word, and which is ready, in the sacred name of "Charity," to fix the seal of its approbation upon that which the God of truth hates, and to bid God-speed to those who are desolating the church and the land with their soul-destroying heresies. Shall I, as a soldier of the cross of Christ—as a sworn witness of his truth, *can* I give my countenance to such a spirit as this? O, no! I cannot devote my life to the defence of those precious truths for which the martyrs of Jesus have shed their blood, and then participate in laying the corner-stone of a building erected, it may be, for the purpose of overthrowing these truths, and unite in supplicating upon such an enterprise the blessing of Almighty God! But this I should be bound to do, as a faithful, consistent Odd-Fellow. Rather than do this, "Let my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." "O! my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united!"

A further examination of the principles which are presented to our view in the Manual, and in the ceremonies of the Order, would,

we think, show that not only is there an absence of any thing that is peculiar to Christianity, from the religion of the Order, but that it is pervaded by a spirit of infidelity. The author of the Manual, though a reverend gentleman, speaks of "mortal life" being "dissolved by the chemistry of death." And in the "funeral service," death is represented as the result of what is called "the fixed law of being, which dedicates all that is mortal to decay and death." Such is the language of Odd-Fellowship. Its striking resemblance to that of the infidel school will be apparent to all who have made themselves acquainted with their views on the subject of death. At all events, the Christian will recognise immediately the difference between such representations of this solemn change, and those of the Scriptures. There death is presented, not as a chemical change, or the result of a fixed law of being, but "*the wages of sin.*"

This may appear to be a very small matter; but apparently unimportant expressions, especially when they appear in official documents, are often indicative of the spirit which animates the public body. Would such lan-

guage as this be likely to be employed by those who had upon their minds any adequate impression of the solemn truth, that "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin?" Ah! we fear, notwithstanding the show which Odd-Fellows make of the Bible, this is not the book with whose language they are most familiar. At all events, they did not find death there presented as the fixed law of being. This truth, (that man must die,) they inform us, "is inscribed upon the great volume of nature, upon its every page." The friends of the deceased, however, in this funeral address, are not told whether it be inscribed in the volume of revelation. It would perhaps be *sectarian* for them, as Odd-Fellows, to suggest to the friends of the departed, that there is such a book, from the perusal of which they might find profit and consolation to their souls.

We believe too, that there is, in the forms observed by the Order, a recognition of the principle of universal salvation. In the address prescribed to be used on that occasion, there is not the slightest hint that the future is a state of punishment to the wicked. On

the contrary, death is spoken of in general terms as "that change which leads to life eternal." The G. M., at the dedication of a cemetery, says: "Let us feel, my brethren, that death is but the gate to a better life, and that over the resting-place of the departed, dwells ever the bright halo of the hope of a glorious resurrection. Hence it is, that we thus strew above the place of tombs, and in the graves of our loved ones, these emblems of undying life, (*strewing evergreens;*) for we know they are but sleeping here until the voice of the Maker and Master of all shall call them to himself, in the day that he makes up his jewels, and proclaims that time and its griefs shall be no more."

We have also a plain assertion of the happiness of the deceased, in the ode which is prescribed to be sung as a part of the funeral service, and which may be found on page 374 of the Manual. After giving us the address and prayer which are to be made on such occasions, the author says: "After the address and prayer, the choir will sing Ode No. 3, (air, 'Pleyel's Hymn,') after which the sprig will be deposited."

Upon turning to the ode, we find one stanza to read thus :

“Though in the Grand Lodge above,
We remember thee in love;
Yet our Lodge has lost thee here—
‘Tis for this we shed the tear.”*

Now let us not be misunderstood. Far be it from us to say that no Odd-Fellows have died in the Lord. We adduce this quotation to prove that the society, as such, recognises the principle of universal salvation, or at least the salvation of all Odd-Fellows—the salvation of those whose belief may not, according to the requirements of the Order, extend beyond that of a Jew or Mahomedan. All such, according to the language of the ode from which we have quoted, are “in the Grand Lodge above;” in other words, are the inhabitants of heaven! We think, then, that we have clearly demonstrated that this last ob-

* And though a storm more fearful than any thou hast yet encountered—that of physical death—shall soon burst upon thee, the hand of God Almighty, which has sustained thee thus far, will protect thee amid that storm, and thou shalt come up through it with joy and gladness to the land of eternal delight.—*Odd-Fellow's Text-Book*, page 162.

jection which we have brought against the Order, is well-founded. Not only is it a society which, as such, knows not the name of Jesus; but it has incorporated into its system principles which are at war with the faith of all evangelical Christians. How then, I ask you, in view of this fact, can it receive the countenance and co-operation of such? This question I leave for the serious and prayerful consideration of those who profess to love the truth as it is in Jesus, and who have solemnly engaged to stand fast in the faith. O, my hearers! I beseech you by the value of this truth, that you look at this matter.

(13.) *Our next objection to this society is, that it exalts the material above the spiritual.* Admitting that the lessons which it inculcates are in accordance with truth and duty, the means which it employs for their inculcation are not of that high and spiritual character which accord with the present economy of Jehovah. An examination of the Manual will show that there is belonging to the Order a vast multitude of "emblems," each of which is supposed to possess "a deep significance;" such, for instance, as "the eye," "the hand

with a heart in it," "the axe and three links," "the skull and cross-bones," "the bee-hive," "the lamb," "the shining sun," "the globe in clouds," "the bundle of rods," &c. &c. It would require no small portion of my time even to mention their names. In addition to this, each degree has its colours, which are, according to the system, equally significant. This feature of the Order has imparted to it a sort of novelty, which has rendered it peculiarly attractive to some minds.

Now this mode of communicating instruction may appear to a certain class of persons one of its excellencies. But let us look at the matter as rational, intelligent men. In the first place, no man can examine the significations attached to these emblems, without the conviction that not a few of them are the dictates of fancy. The meanings affixed to the several colours of the rainbow, by the Order, have just about as much foundation in the nature of things, as "the language of flowers." This, however, is a matter of comparatively little importance; and we have certainly no disposition to disturb that feeling of satisfaction which the members of the Order evidently

take in the contemplation of their emblems, regalia, jewels, &c. But allow me to present the matter to you in another form. Allow me to ask you whether, in your opinion, such a mode of communicating knowledge is calculated to expand and elevate the mind of man to any great degree? The multiplication of outward signs may certainly very well answer the purpose of awakening the attention and instructing the minds of children; but is it adapted to the enlightenment of persons who have passed, as all Odd-Fellows have, the years of their minority? Does the employment of such appliances argue much for the intellectuality of those who employ them? We think not; in all sincerity, we think not. It is unnecessary for us to adduce proofs to establish this position. Who is there that does not know that this mode of instruction is only followed in the case of those who are mentally disqualified for the contemplation of abstract truth, and for those rational processes by which her golden treasures are disclosed to the mind. That knowledge of truth for which we are dependent upon outward emblems, must necessarily be limited in its

range. Under such a restriction, it is only certain elementary principles which the mind can reach; and when it has arrived this length, it must remain stationary, or else leave the emblems behind, throwing them off, as an incumbrance, that it may take its flight into the higher and purer regions of thought and reason.

We see this fact exhibited to us in the mode observed by God, in the communication of divine truth to man. It was mainly by the use of emblems, that the church, during her infantile state, was instructed. Hence the former economy was characterized by outward, material representations of certain great and important mysteries. These representations were adapted to the condition of the church, at the time in which they were given. She was then in a preparatory course of instruction, like children under their tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Under such circumstances, emblematical representations were highly valuable for fixing in the mind a knowledge of first principles. But they were utterly incapable of presenting to the mind any thing like an

adequate and comprehensive view of divine truth. Hence they are called by the apostle, "A shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things themselves." And, therefore, when this shadowy conception of these good things was formed in the mind, and its effect fairly tried, the shadow was succeeded by the substance. Truth was brought before the understanding, not by outward emblems—emblems which the apostle calls "beggarly elements"—but in its living reality. Such an exhibition we have in the present economy; and this constitutes its glory, as distinguished from the former. It is our privilege, and a most valuable privilege it is, that we are freed from these beggarly elements; that we enjoy a more direct communication with truth, than through such outward, material media; that we can bask in her warm rays, as they emanate from the word of God. Such is the high position which it is our privilege, as the subjects of God's moral government, now to enjoy. Shall we then leave this clear light, which the gospel of the grace of God has shed around our path, for the obscure adumbrations of a former

age? Shall we come down from the mount of rational contemplation, where God himself has placed us, with the Bible in our hands, that we may amuse ourselves with looking at—what? *a bundle of rods!—an axe and three links!!*

It may be thought that these emblematical representations possess an advantage over that which is attained by written and oral instruction, inasmuch as they are calculated to awaken attention. We would admit the force of this remark, were they designed for children. That they are adapted to such we do not deny. Even to such, however, this advantage they possess no longer than the charm of novelty lasts. The mind, in its aspirations, soars above them. It is well that it does. If such were not the case, its conceptions would very soon become gross and carnal. Such is the tendency of the constant use of such outward, material exhibitions. The Jews, with all the helps they received from the instructions of their prophets, had become so carnal in their conceptions, that the most of them scarcely looked beyond the material to the “heavenly things,” of which

they were but a shadowy representation. And if such was the effect of the use of this mode of attaining knowledge, under a system of divine appointment, what must be its effect under a system devised by the ingenuity of man. See, my hearers, its sad effect in the Romish Church. There it is observed to a far greater extent than in any other church. Her altars are decorated with flowers of various colours, and her chapels and cathedrals adorned with pictures, to which the hand of art has given the finest finish. But do we find among her people a more enlarged acquaintance with, and a higher appreciation of, the facts and truths of Christianity? On the contrary, do they not occupy the lowest ranks in the scale of intelligence? and is not their intelligence circumscribed just in proportion to the degree of attention which they pay to these things? Facts, therefore, prove our assertion, and lay a foundation for a strong objection to this mode of communicating moral and religious instruction to their members, observed by this and other similar societies.

We regard the very emblems of the beauty and expressiveness of which they boast so

much, a source of immeasurable evil. If they were employed as mere marks of distinction, there would be less ground for the objection. They are *the books* from which they learn their lessons of truth and morals. Turning aside from the written revelation which God has given to man, and from the works of the great and good, they please themselves with looking at pictures—pictures which they have seen, perhaps, a thousand times before, and which can do nothing more than conduct the inquirer after truth, merely, to the threshold of the temple of knowledge.

Trusting that you will give this prominent feature of the society, which we have had under consideration, the attention it deserves, we now take leave of it. We ask you to consider whether the means which it employs are in any measure adequate to the great results which it proposes to accomplish? Is it likely that this world is to be reformed; that the reign of truth, friendship, and love, is to be brought about by the use of such instrumentalities? I will not insult your understandings by giving an answer to this question.

LECTURE VI.

WE now propose to give our closing lecture on the subject which has for some time been claiming our attention. We shall proceed, as we have heretofore done, with a statement of our objections, and the grounds upon which these objections are based.

(13.) *We object to this society that it is chargeable with a profanation of that which is sacred.* Webster, among other definitions which he gives us, tells us that *to profane* signifies “to put to a wrong use.” In this sense the term is used by us in the statement of the present objection. The application of any thing in itself sacred to a common use, or to a use different from that for which it was originally designed, may be said, we think, with the greatest propriety, to profane it.

Now to the Christian, save the very being of Jehovah, there is nothing more sacred than the Sabbath, the scriptures, the ordinances

of religious worship, and heaven. If, therefore, we find these employed for purposes different from those for which they were originally designed by God, we think the charge which we have brought against this society is fully substantiated.

In the first place, let us see whether the sanctity of the holy Sabbath is regarded as all evangelical Christians believe it should be regarded. It is at least a part of *our* profession, that the *whole* of the Sabbath is to be "spent in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy." Is it so spent by Odd-Fellows? We refer not now to the conduct of individual members of the Order. We ask you not how many of them are to be found on that holy day in the house of God. Odd-Fellows know this, and you, too, my hearers, know how far they are remarkable for their conscientiousness in this respect. But we shall institute no inquiries in reference to this matter. Is there no profanation of the Sabbath chargeable upon the society, as such? On page 35 of the Manual we are expressly told "that, prior to the



year 1829, degrees were conferred (as in Great Britain) on Sundays in the lodge-room, and the act was called, delivering lectures." It would seem from this that the practice still exists in Great Britain, nor does the statement in the Manual, which we have just quoted, afford conclusive evidence that they do not still hold their meetings on the Sabbath. The object for which the author of the Manual refers to this circumstance, does not appear to be to inform us that the Sabbath is no longer employed by Odd-Fellows for holding their meetings, but that degrees are not conferred now in the lodge-room as they formerly were. At all events, there is not one word of disapprobation expressed by the reverend author in relation to such a use being made of this day of sacred rest. Allow me here to express my firm belief that the Sabbath is still so employed in certain places. In no section of the country would the members refuse thus to meet for the purpose of attending to funeral rites. Now, we ask, is this the appropriate work of the Sabbath? Is it a part of the public or private exercises of God's worship, in which the whole day,

according to our Confession, is to be spent? Was the Sabbath made for Odd-Fellows to meet together and dress themselves in their regalia, even for the purpose of doing honours to the dead? We deny that it was so made. The time spent in going to and from the lodge-room on that day, and in organizing the meeting, and in making all the necessary arrangements, is not spent either in the public or private exercises of God's worship. And no man can show that these performances of the Order are the works either of necessity or mercy. This is an objection designed for the serious consideration of Presbyterians—of those who have been taught to answer the question, "How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?"

Again, look at the use which is made by the Order of those holy symbols that were appointed by God for the most sacred purposes. Here we have a society employing, as one of the emblems of the third or Royal Blue Degree, a representation of "the brazen serpent erected by Moses (we use the very words of the Manual) according to God's direction, to heal the Israelites when bitten by the fiery

serpents sent among them to chastise them for their sins." One of the emblems of the fifth or Scarlet Degree is "the budded rod of Aaron," which the author tells us is "peculiarly suitable to the degree of the priestly order." We have also "the ark of the covenant" as one of the emblems of the Royal Purple Degree. The author of the Manual, after giving us a pictorial representation of this emblem, says, "The ark of the covenant belonged to the Holy of Holies, within the second veil of the tabernacle, and contained the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the law; and on it was the mercy seat, overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim, between which the shekinah, or cloud of glory, denoting the presence of the Holy One, appeared to the high priest. It is, therefore, a most solemn emblem, suggestive of all that is known of heaven itself, of which the Holy of holies was but a type or pattern." In addition to this, we have, as the jewel of "the M. E. Grand High Priest," "a breast-plate within a double triangle of a yellow material, worn on the breast." These may suffice as specimens.

Now we all know that these were divine institutions of an awfully sacred character. Indeed, the author of the Manual tells us that their "rites and ceremonies were originally of a religious character, copied in the first instance from a divine institution." The same, as is obvious to any one in the least acquainted with the scriptures, may be said of many of these emblems. Now, we ask, in what character and for what purpose are these emblems employed by Odd-Fellows? They are either employed as means of divine worship, or they are not. If they are so employed, they are used not only without, but directly against, the authority of Christ, he by his death having abolished the ceremonial law. To use them, then, in this way, we affirm, is nothing less than Judaism; and if these emblems are thus used, so are all the rest, such as "the shining sun," "the half moon," &c.; and in what other light can those who thus use them be regarded, than as Mohammedans or Pagans? If they are not used as means of worship, then we contend that it is a gross profanation of these sacred things to employ

them as emblems in their society. As we before intimated, they cannot, as a society, whose articles of faith rise no higher than Deism, use them in the way and for the purpose for which they were originally designed; and, therefore, these things being sacred, they cannot be used without profanation. They are perverted to purposes different from their original design; and, dissevered as they are from the connexion in which they stood with the ritual of worship, as established by God himself, the employment of them is only calculated to impart to the mind false ideas, and prevent the reader of the scriptures from deriving that instruction which these scriptures would otherwise impart. It is utterly impossible for those who have familiarized themselves with these sacred symbols, in their connexion with the system of Odd-Fellowship, where the Christian, Jew, and Mohammedan meet around the same altar, to contemplate them as they are presented to his view in the scriptures as even shadowy representations of the good things of the gospel of the grace of God. We say, then, that they cannot be so used without profanation; and we have not

the least doubt that such a use of these holy symbols is calculated to diminish our reverence for them as divine institutions.

In the same light also is to be regarded the practice, when dedicating them, of sprinkling their halls in the name of Friendship. Is there not here an evident allusion to the sprinkling under the law of Moses, and the rite of baptism as it is observed in many Christian churches? Will he who is accustomed to witness such ceremonies in the lodge-room be prepared to receive such impressions from the observance of this holy ordinance in the house of God as its solemnity calls for? And we may ask, too, Will he, who in the recesses of the Mystic Temple is accustomed to associate the name "High Priest" with one of the scarlet-coloured members of his Order, be prepared, when he reads in this blessed book of a great High Priest, to fix his mind upon the contemplation of his person and offices with becoming reverence? To us such a supposition is most unreasonable. It is in direct opposition to the law of association—a most powerfully operative law in the human mind.



But this is not all. Even heaven, that holy and happy place, where there shall in no wise enter in any thing that defileth, is profanely converted by the Order into a lodge-room. We say by the Order, for not only do their writers and speakers compare this bright and glorious place to the lodge, but we find such comparisons employed in the addresses and prayers that are appointed by the Order to be used on special occasions. Thus in the prayer, at the opening of the lodge, we have these words prescribed to be employed by "the chaplain or brother designated for that purpose:" "Let thy blessing rest upon our Order—upon all the lodges, grand and subordinate, belonging to our entire family of brothers. Let friendship, love, and truth prevail, until the last tear of distress be wiped away, and the lodge below be dissolved by the glory and grandeur of the grand lodge above." (Pages 107, 108.) At the dedication of an Odd-Fellow's Hall, one of the prayers of the many short ones which the G. C. offers on that occasion, is in these words: "May brotherly love continue beyond the tomb. When He who sent us shall have called

us home to render our final account, may we all meet as brothers in that house not made with hands—in that celestial lodge, whose members no tongue can number, and the Master of which is the Father of the spirits of all flesh." (Page 356.) Indeed, so prominently is the idea to be kept before the mind, that the lodge here below is in some sort a representation of heaven, that "the Royal Purple Degree" has been instituted for the purpose of distinctly setting it forth. This degree denotes the rest to which the pilgrim will be brought who has faithfully discharged the duties imposed upon him as a member of the other degrees. It is the better country for which the patriarchs of old were seeking. Hence the emblems are, "the scythe," "the hour-glass," and "the ark of the covenant." The first of these denotes the end of all things; the second, the speedy passage of time; and the third, heaven itself, according to the interpretation of the author of the Manual. At the conclusion of the author's remarks on this degree, namely, "the Royal Purple Degree," he gives us an ode, of which the following is the last stanza,

in which the patriarchal pilgrims, after having arrived at the holy place, in which the ark of the covenant was deposited, are represented as thus addressing the seraphim, who are supposed to be guarding the tent, as emblematical of angels keeping watch at the gates of heaven :

“ Bright seraphim, who guard the tent,
We kneel before the holy place :
Then let the purple veil be rent ;
Behold your chief with open face.
‘ Rise, patriarchs, rise ! Behold in me
The centre of your mystic ring—
Your password through eternity—
Melchisedek, your priest and king.’”

My hearers, let me ask you, as Christians, if there be not in all this something shocking to the feelings of your souls ? Can you regard with approbation a society which thus brings down to the familiarities of the lodgeroom the bright glories of the heavenly world ? Alas ! that there are professing Christians who are willing to give their countenance to such a profanation.

Nor is this all. Not only have they taken some of the sacred symbols which the Great God appointed for high and holy purposes,

but they have even taken from the holy book of God itself some of its most interesting and expressive passages, and employed them in application to the Order and its ceremonies. The author of the Manual finds authority for the exclusiveness of the Order, and the *oddities* which distinguish it, in the fact that God himself selected a "chosen people" as "a peculiar people." "These," he says, "were to be odd-fellows among the nations around them." (Page 63.) Again, we must be told that the spirit of love which characterizes the Order, "is the hidden name in the white stone, which he knoweth best who most truly possesses it." In order to encourage candidates to seek admission into the Order, their attention is directed at the beginning of the chapter to the words of the Saviour, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." (Page 88.) On the subject of initiation, in order to inspire the candidate with confidence, these sweet words of God, by his prophet Isaiah, are prominently presented to his view: "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths that

they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Page 92.) On the same page we are gravely told, that "what regeneration by the word of truth is in religion, initiation is in Odd-Fellowship." The command of Moses, in Lev. xxv. 35, "If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or sojourner, that he may live with thee," is urged upon Odd-Fellows as a command which should be religiously adopted by every brother of this degree—the Royal Blue Degree, (page 138)—thus making brethren in the lodge-room sustain toward each other the same relation as is sustained by the professed people of God toward their brethren. The author of the Manual says to the Scarlet Degree, or the degree of the priestly order, "Be a true member of the ancient Order of which it was said, 'The priest's lips should keep knowledge,' and strive to hasten the period when every Grand shall be a king and a priest unto God." On page 259, he says to the Past Vice Grand,

"In truth there is no inapt resemblance between your humble duties and those of Moses at Mount Sinai. Both delivered the law, obligation, and charge of their office faithfully, and bound those under their instruction to order and obedience." On page 273, he says to the members of the patriarchal degree, "As if prostrate at the foot of the sacred Mount, receive this law to govern your future actions." The reference here is to the law of the Ten Commandments. On page 275, he informs us that "the crook," one of their emblems, "reminds us that the patriarchal shepherds were Odd-Fellows." We called your attention in our last Lecture to the fact that that most beautiful psalm, (cxxii.,) in which the child of God expresses the desire which he has for the ordinances, is recited throughout in application to the lodge-room.

Now we ask you to look at this matter as Christians—as those who "tremble at the word of the Lord"—and then say whether a connexion with such a society as this has not a direct tendency to diminish our reverence for sacred things? To our mind, nothing is more evident. Apart from the consideration

of the essential impropriety of applying these sacred things to a purpose different from the one originally designed, is it possible, according to the principles of mental philosophy, that the intermixture with the exercises of the Lodge of these things, around which cluster the holiest associations of the Christian, should have any other than the most disastrous effect upon the interests of his soul. Can it be to the spiritual advantage of the Christian that there should be such a confounding of the lodge and its performances with the house of God and seasons of holy communion with him? Oh, my hearers! I feel that this part of my subject possesses an importance, to convey which to your minds, I cannot find words. In truth, it is of such a nature, that none but the true Christian—none but one who has felt the power of the holy mysteries of the gospel upon his own soul—can fully appreciate it. It addresses itself not so much to the intellect of the rationalist as to the spiritual instincts of the child of God. With such we leave it, assured that the remarks which we have made will receive from them a cordial response.

(15.) *We object to this society, that in our view it has a demoralizing tendency.* This is a grave charge, but we are willing to submit it to the test of a rigid examination. We have seen that while religion is recognised, the principles of Christianity are ignored by the society, as such. Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans are instructed to cherish a spirit of "toleration in opinions wherever they differ;" and "the descendants of Abraham, the diverse followers of Jesus, and the Pariahs of the stricter sects, here gather round the same altar as one family, manifesting no difference of creed or worship." Such being the fact, does it not necessarily follow that the morality of the Order cannot be a Christian morality? It is not such a morality as is based upon Christian principles—a morality which flows from the life and power of Christianity in the soul. It is, therefore, a false morality, whatever may be the outward appearances it may assume. Is it necessary for me, in the presence of a Christian assembly, to prove that the external conduct which proceeds, not from the influence of the gospel of the grace of God upon the heart, is essen-

tially, radically defective—that no man, who has not an established faith in the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and whose heart is not under the influence of its principles, can ever attain to that holiness which will be pleasing to God, and prepare him for the enjoyments and employments of a higher state of being? Surely it is not necessary for me to prove this to those of you who are not strangers to our religion. Can a man's life, in point of morality, be such as it ought to be until he has come to God, the fountain of purity? But how is he to come? The Saviour answers the inquiry: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Can his life be such as it ought to be in this respect until he has denied himself of ungodliness and worldly lusts, and is living "soberly, righteously, and godly in the world." But what is it that teaches him so to do and so to live? The Bible tells us that it is "the grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men." And what is this grace but that gospel which reveals a crucified Saviour, and which makes known to all their lost and helpless condition, and points them to Calvary as the only source

of relief? The society of Odd-Fellows, as we have seen, knows nothing of all this. Their religion is nature, and their God is the God of nature. What they take from the Bible, they take from it for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing the principles of this natural religion. Their morality, therefore, as such, must of necessity be essentially defective, even where the outward conduct is apparently upright; and not only essentially defective, but exceedingly partial in an external point of view. How strikingly conclusive upon this point is the testimony of the illustrious Dr. Chalmers! In an address which he delivered to the inhabitants of Kilmany, when about to leave that parish, in 1815, he makes a record of the effect of what he calls "an actual though undesigned experiment;" an experiment which, he tells us, he "prosecuted for upwards of twelve years" among that people. After speaking of the vehemence with which he expatiated "on the meanness of dishonesty, on the villany of falsehood, on the despicable acts of calumny in a word, upon all those deformities of character which awaken the natural indignation

of the human heart against the pests and disturbers of human society," he thus remarks: "I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged all the virtues and proprieties of social life, had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners. And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart in all its desires and affections from God; it was not till reconciliation to him became the distinct and prominent object of my ministerial exertions; it was not till I took the scriptural way of laying the method of reconciliation before them; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit given through the channel of Christ's mediatorship, to all who ask him, was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependence and their prayers; in one word, it was not till the contemplations of my people were turned to these great and essential elements, in the business of a soul providing for its interests with God, and the concerns of eternity, that I ever heard of any of those subordinate reformations which I aforetime

made the earnest and zealous, but I am afraid, at the same time, the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations."

Here you have the testimony of one of the most eloquent and powerful divines that ever adorned the pulpit, as to the utter inefficiency of all those efforts to promote morality of life, which do not bring into requisition the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. If Chalmers looked upon the labour which he had expended for twelve years, in trying, with all the energies of his powerful mind, to moralize his parishioners by simply setting before them the beauties of virtue, and the deformities of vice, as labour lost, even in reference to the object which he then proposed to himself, how much good, think you, will be likely to result from a society, all whose efforts, in so far as they are directed to this end, are animated and controlled by this very principle? And yet there are to be found members of the Church of Christ, that will indulge in laudations of the moralizing influence of such a Christless system as Odd-Fellowship! Can it be that such persons have ever felt the attractions of the Cross, and the constraining

influence of a Saviour's love? For myself, let me say, that I have no faith in the moralizing influence of any system, however skilfully it may be contrived, and with whatever force it may be set in operation, that keeps out of sight the humbling and self-denying doctrines of the gospel. And not only so, but I believe that the influence of such a system will be, in very many instances, against the cause of true morality, and for the simple reason that it is delusive in its tendency. It draws the mind away from the great principles of the gospel. It supplants the gospel, in the affections of those who are brought under its influence. The very intimacy of that association, which a connexion with such a society as that of the Order of Odd-Fellows necessarily brings with it, has a tendency, in so far as the influence of the society extends, to counteract, or at least to diminish, the influence of those instrumentalities which God has appointed for the moral elevation of our race. The moral virtues, though bearing the same name by which they are known in the church, undergo a transformation in adapting them to the system for which they have na-

turally no affinity. The "brotherly kindness" which the Scriptures inculcate, here becomes love to the "covenanted fraternity;" and that high and holy spirit of "charity," which in the gospel "seeketh not her own," here becomes allied to the selfish principles of our nature; and while she with one hand distributes her favours equally to the rich and the poor, at the same time holds out the other that she may receive from both a full equivalent. Such is the morality of Odd-Fellowship. Let me say it is worthy of a Christless institution.

Perhaps it may be said that the morality of Odd-Fellows, at least in an external point of view, will compare favourably with that of any other class in the community. It is quite an easy matter to make assertions of this kind in reference to any society; and those who make them have this advantage: They well knew that in order to meet such an objection as this, it would be necessary to enter into an examination of the character of each member of the society. Such an examination, however, from the circumstances of the case, is utterly impossible. We have nothing to do

with the lives of the members of the Order. It is with their principles, and the tendency of their system, that we have to do. There is no society of men on earth that boast of a purer morality than that of the Jesuits; and yet, where is there a society of men whose principles are more corrupt and demoralizing in their tendency? We repeat it—we have nothing to do, in this discussion, with the lives of Odd-Fellows. Our acquaintance with the fraternity is not such as to qualify us for making an examination into this matter, were such an examination otherwise possible. We leave it to those of you who have such an acquaintance, to say whether their external morality accords with their high pretensions; whether those of them who are members of the church, are superior, in this respect, to those of their brethren who are not favoured with the moralizing influences of their society. We are perfectly willing that the investigation should be made by those who are qualified to do so. That the attempt, however, will be made by those who possess such qualifications, and who have any adequate views of what constitutes true morality, is an idea

that we have not for one moment entertained. We know that Deists and Infidels—those who scoff at Christianity and its institutions—may be members in good standing in the Order. The constitution forbids it not. And is it so, that claims to superior morality, put forth by a society which receives into its warm embrace such characters, are to be regarded with favour by those who bear the name of Jesus? Has it come to this, that a Christian minister has no ground to entertain fears in reference to the moral influence which a society composed of such persons, or into which such persons are by the constitution admitted, is likely to exert upon the members of his congregation? We know not how it may strike others; but we are amazed that there should be a diversity of opinion among Christians in reference to a matter of this kind. Where now, among Christians, is the spirit of the holy apostle of the Gentiles? He asks: “What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” Were Paul here now, he would find in this society an answer to that most emphatic interrogation. He would see “the believer” associated in loving “brotherhood” with an “infidel”—

both meeting "around the same altar," and at the same fireside, and together watching around the bed of the sick and dying.

But perhaps we are going too far—perhaps we are indulging in unauthorized statements. That they all meet around the same altar has been previously proved by the express language of the Manual.

Hear a little further testimony in reference to the "part" which the members of this Order have with each other. The author of the Manual says, on page 104: "We gladly greet each initiated as a brother beloved." On pages 212 and 213, the same author, in counselling the investigating committee on the importance of faithfully discharging their duty in the way of making all necessary inquiries in reference to the character and fitness of the candidate, says to them: "Reflect that our lodge is our family, and that admission into it, frequently, almost necessarily, admits into our domestic circles also." And again, on the same page, he says: "If laid on the bed of sickness, the candidate (if become a member) may be the visiter to call on you freely, mingle with your family, and

impart to them the benefits allowed by your lodge." Again: "When you are sick or dying, he, if a member, may be detailed to sit at your bedside during the silent watches of the night. He will mingle with your loved ones when they most need sympathy and support, and when this want will render them most open and confiding. He will administer the medicines on which your *life* depends, when your family sleep under the double influence of deep grief and great weariness; and he is required to attend you with all a nurse's prudence, and a brother's tenderness. And should death invade the citadel of life, he will be amid your mourning family—perhaps at midnight—their aider, consoler, and friend."

Ask not, then, in view of all this most intimate association into which a connexion with the Order introduces its members, "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" How much greater part, tell me, could they have than to "greet one another as brethren beloved," and to mingle together in the closest fellowship, not only in the lodge-room, but in the domestic circle, and around the bed of

the sick and dying? Such is Odd-Fellowship; and yet Christians must go to it to be taught morality. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." O, has it come to this, I say, that Christians, in order to receive lessons of morality, must go to those who treat as a fable the story of the Cross?

We have said that we would not enter into an examination of the lives of the members of this Order. Something, however, may be ascertained respecting its standard of morality by a reference to one fact. We are told that its morality will favourably compare with that of the church. Well, my hearers, what do you think of those Christians who attend balls? We do not say, of those who may occasionally indulge in dancing; but of those who attend balls. What think you of the morality of such Christians? You will doubtless say, it is certainly of a very questionable character. The ball-going Christian is looked upon as rather a poor sort of a Christian. One thing is certain, there is not a pastor through-

out the land who would not have very serious doubts of his morality. We say morality; for Christianity condemns nothing which the laws of morality do not condemn. That conduct which is inconsistent with this, violates the law of God. Let me go further, and ask those of you who are parents, whether the ball-room is the place in which you expect your children to be taught the true principles of morality? Ah! there is not a parent who now hears me—at all events, there is not a Christian parent who would not look upon an attendance upon such a place, by his children, as exposing them to peculiar temptations. Do you know, however, my Christian hearers, that the Order of Odd-Fellows, as a society, sanctions and sustains this practice? If you have any doubts in reference to this matter, we can very easily remove them. "The Digest," on page 31, says: "All processions and *balls*, at which the regalia, emblems, &c., are to be used, are prohibited, unless permission therefor be granted, after due consideration, in open Grand Lodge, or by a Grand Master, in the recess of the Grand Lodge." Here you see that the Order has

made express provision for balls. So important has this been deemed by the *Reverend* author of the Manual, that he informs his readers, on page 341, that "No lodge or encampment can appear in public with its regalia and emblems, at any procession, *ball*, &c., without the consent of its Grand Lodge or Grand Encampment, previously obtained. Generally, the G. M. and the G. P. are invested with discretionary power to grant such permission, during the recess of the bodies over which they preside." That you may see that the practice of this fraternity is consistent with its principles, allow me to read you an advertisement which I cut from the Public Ledger since I commenced this course of lectures.

"ODD-FELLOWS' BALL—AT THE MUSICAL FUND HALL.—The Managers have the pleasure of announcing that Monday evening, March 7th, has been selected for this *Grand Fête*; and by permission of the Grand Lodge, members of the Order will appear in Regalia. Tickets are now ready, and for sale by the Janitor of the Hall, North Sixth street, or at the store of Grand Secretary Curtis, corner

of Sixth and Haines streets. Principal Director, P. G. P. S. Duval, assisted by P. G. C. Bossert, Brothers W. Linck, W. Simon, T. Moore, C. Piel, and C. Simon. P. G. J. Lowery, Chairman B. M.; P. G. E. Booth, Secretary. Beck's Philadelphia Band is engaged, and will perform on this occasion on their new silver instruments."

Here we have incontestable proof, not merely that Odd-Fellows attend balls—(had this been all we should have made no reference to it)—but that the society, in its corporate capacity, has made provision for them, and consequently thrown the whole weight of its authority upon their side. It enters into their system of operations, and constitutes a part of that machinery which they have at work in the community. The members appear there with their "regalia, emblems," &c. Yes, with "the ark of the covenant," "the breastplate," "Aaron's budded rod," "the brazen serpent," "the Bible," &c.! These sacred insignia are made to grace the ball-room! And yet there are professing Christians who can see no desecration in all this! But we must not digress from the point before us, which is, the

influence that this society is likely to exert upon the morals of its members. And now let me ask you, in view of this fact, what is the character of that influence? We call upon you as professing Christians, to look at this matter. We appeal to the wives and mothers who may be within the hearing of my voice, Do you desire your husbands and sons to be brought under the moral and religious influence of a ball-loving fraternity? Are you willing, as professing Christians, that those who are dear to your hearts should have for their instructors in morality those who find their pleasures in the song, and dance, and gaieties of the ball-room? If this be so; if this appeal makes no impression upon you; if it is a matter of indifference to you whether their hearts are set upon such amusements or not, then, we say to you—throw off your profession of Christianity. We call upon you to bear the blessed name of the Saviour no longer. You are strangers to the power of his grace, and the self-denying influence of that faith which is “the victory that overcometh the world.” Away with such Christianity as this! Give me the man of

the world; give me the open infidel, in preference to the man, who, after having professed to deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Christ, can yet find his delight in such places, or in the companionship of those who frequent them. Awful indeed is the guilt in which the former has involved himself by a rejection of the Saviour; but deeper and darker is the guilt of that man, who, after having professed to receive him, and consecrate himself and his all to his service, should be found thus practically renouncing that Saviour. Such Christians the Church of God needs not, and we trust that she desires them not. The regalia and emblems that are designed to decorate a ball-room, are not for those who have put on the livery of Heaven, and who wear the insignia of a crucified Saviour.

My hearers, we shall pursue this subject no farther. We think that we have dwelt upon the matter sufficiently long to show you that Odd-Fellowship is inconsistent with the public good, and therefore that it deserves not the countenance and co-operation of those who love the Saviour, and are anxious to pro-

mote the interests of society at large. Have we not shown you that the society justly exposes itself to the contempt and ridicule of the wise and manly? Have we not shown you that it renders itself justly liable to the suspicions of the virtuous? Have we not shown you that a person, in making application for admission into the Order, subjects himself to a risk which no man, who regards his reputation and his interests, should be willing to incur? Have we not shown you that there is in the very pledge given the abuse of the ordinance of the oath? Have we not shown you that a connexion with it is insnaring to the conscience? Have we not shown you that a connexion with it is inconsistent with that feeling of individual responsibility and independence which it is our right and our duty at all times to cherish? Have we not shown you that the society falsifies its own pretensions? Have we not shown you that it is not in reality, as it assumes to be, a benevolent society? Have we not shown you that it is such an organization as is, in its own nature, liable to operate injuriously to the rights and interests of the community? Have we not

shown you that, in the objects which it proposes to accomplish, and in the mode of its operations, it usurps the place of the Church? Have we not shown you that the religion which it incorporates into its system is a Christless religion, and consequently that the society is a Christless society? Have we not shown you that a connexion with it is inconsistent with our devotion to the truth and cause of Christ? Have we not shown you that it exalts the material above the spiritual? Have we not shown you that it is chargeable with a profanation of that which is sacred? Have we not shown you that it has a demoralizing tendency? We repeat it, have we not established each and all of these positions in relation to the Order? And how have we established them? Has it been by indulging in conjectures and surmisings? You know that such has not been the case. You who have been present throughout the whole of this discussion, will bear me witness that our proofs have been drawn directly from the authorized publications of the Order. What say you, then, to all these things? Will you say that we know nothing of Odd-Fel-

lowship? This we have heard has been said by some since we commenced delivering these Lectures. Will *you* say it? If so, then you must either charge upon us a want of capacity to understand books written in plain English, or assert that these books can give the reader no idea of Odd-Fellowship. Which of these positions will you take? If the former, of course we have nothing to say; if the latter, then we have only to tell you that your assertion is a flat contradiction of the written statement of not less than seventy-four of the most distinguished dignitaries of the Order. They say that the Manual, upon which we have chiefly drawn, is "a complete and faithful history of the principles, instructions, work, and organization of the Order;" and that "it is full and accurate in its details." This is what *they* say. You say, however, that a person of ordinary capacity, who has carefully read it, knows nothing about Odd-Fellowship! Perhaps you will say that we have misquoted or misinterpreted the language employed by these authors. If so, let it be shown. The books are in the market, and are accessible to all. Until this be done, we deny the right of any man to make the charge.

If a person can form no idea of Odd-Fellowship until he has formed a connexion with the society, it follows as a necessary consequence that one of the principal objections which we have urged against the society is true, namely, that a man, in the very act of connecting himself with it, does—*he knows not what*. Mark that admission, my friends, and put those in mind of it who will tell you that one who has carefully read a Manual of three hundred and eighty-four pages, written by one of the ardent friends of the Order, knows nothing about it. Tell them that he, at least, knows this much—that a person who joins the society, gives up his understanding, reason, and conscience for safe keeping into the hands of others.

From remarks which have occasionally dropped from the lips of others within our hearing, we apprehend that some of those who are opposed to the Order, have thought that we have not been sufficiently strong in the language employed by us in relation to it, regarding it as a society far more objectionable in its character and influence than a person would feel himself authorized

to conclude from an examination of what its friends have deemed expedient to present to the public. They have thought that the representations of those who have solemnly appealed to Heaven to witness the fidelity with which they would preserve inviolate the secrets of the Order, should be taken with considerable allowance. This, however, has not been the course which we have seen proper to pursue. We set out in the discussion with the firm resolve that the cause should be tried by the testimony of its friends, leaving to each individual to make such allowance as the circumstances of the case, and the amount of knowledge which he himself may possess, may seem to him to justify. We do not regret that this course has been adopted by us, and that it has been steadily pursued throughout this discussion. We rejoice that no man can say that we have been roaming through the fields of conjecture, or flying in the airy regions of imagination.

What think you, then, of this Order, in view of all the considerations which we have presented to you? Is it such a society as that, by a connexion with it, you can glorify

God, and be instrumental in hastening on the dawn of a brighter day than that which has yet shone upon our world? I leave this question for the serious consideration of those who wish to know and do their duty.

It may be a matter of surprise to some of you, my hearers, that in this discussion we have had the countenance of so few of our brethren in the ministry—that notwithstanding we publicly engaged to show the inconsistency of the Order, not only with the public good, but with Christianity, and addressed an invitation to most of the ministerial brethren in the District to favour us with their presence, but very few have deemed it expedient even to hear for one evening what we have had to say on the subject. This circumstance, we say, may be to some of you a matter of surprise. In this, however, there is nothing surprising to your speaker. Had we proposed to deliver a course of lectures on any of the popular subjects of the day, we cannot persuade ourselves that so few of these good brethren would have favoured us with their presence. It has been, my hearers, in this respect, just as we expected. Think not,

however, from this circumstance that we have not in general their sympathy. Of this fact we have no more doubt than that we are now addressing you. What! not the sympathy of Christian ministers, in opposing a society that excludes from its forms of prayers the name of Jesus, and that makes provision for balls? These brethren are in some respects differently situated from your speaker. Their churches are filled with members of the Order. A worthy brother in the ministry, and the pastor of a congregation in this District, told me since I commenced to deliver these lectures, that he believed there was not a man in his church, save one deacon, who was not a member of the Order. Let a man so situated identify himself with me in this opposition—let him thus show himself publicly as an enemy to an organization—an organization bound together by solemn covenant ties and pledges—an organization to which, if we are to believe the Manual, the members have “vowed to devote their lives”—let that man declare war against such a “mighty army,” or give his countenance to those who are doing so, and a short time will tell the results.

I tell you, my friends, that this secret society has numbers and resources at its command sufficient to give it a controlling influence, both in the Church and in the State; and the time is coming when its extensive prevalence will agitate the community with a violence not less than that which was some years ago occasioned by the once numerous and popular Order of Free-Masons. I thank God that it has not such an influence in that congregation of which it is my privilege to have the oversight, and that I have been enabled to lift up my testimony against it. This I have done in full view of all the opposition to which it will be likely to subject me in this community. In this public testimony, it is gratifying to me to reflect that I am not alone. But though such should not be the case, I trust that the solemn words of my Master, "Be thou faithful unto the death," will ever be a sufficient consideration to induce me to oppose every system which I believe to be dishonouring to his blessed name, whatever may be the measure of popular favour it has acquired. I undertook this discussion from a deep conviction that I had a duty to dis-

charge to the members of that flock of which the Holy Ghost has made me an overseer, and for whose souls I have vowed to watch as one that must give an account. If my labours shall be the means of keeping any of them from identifying themselves with this and all similar organizations, my object will be accomplished.

Those members of the Order who have been present during this somewhat protracted discussion, will here accept my cordial thanks for the patience and respect with which they have listened to this expression of my views. To such we would here take occasion to give our solemn assurance that we are utterly unconscious of having uttered a word from the impulse of an unkindly feeling towards any member of the Order. Such a feeling does not exist, and consequently has had no influence whatever in bringing us to the conclusion at which we have arrived in relation to it. To this conclusion we have been led by an examination of the authorities to which we have so often referred. Let me here also distinctly say that we have been very far from supposing that a connexion with it has been

formed by you, my friends, under an impression that it is what we have represented it to be. We believe that multitudes enter it, like the chaplain to whom we referred in the last Lecture, from mistaken views of the principles which it involves. They have given the subject but very little attention. They have regarded it simply in the light of a beneficial society, without taking a comprehensive view of the workings of the system upon society at large. Such a view of it we have endeavoured in these Lectures to take; and now, my dear friends of the Order, allow me to express the hope, that among those of you who may have been present during this discussion, there will not be wanting some who will have the moral—shall I not say, the Christian courage to rise superior to the unhappy influences by which, as a member of the Order, you are at present surrounded—entangling and powerful as these influences are—and give the considerations we have presented an impartial examination? Whatever prejudices you may entertain against the speaker, let not these prejudices render your

heart impervious to the truth. In the words of the celebrated proverbialist, let me say:

“Commend thy mind unto candour, and grudge not as though thou hadst a teacher;

Nor scorn angelic truth for the sake of her evil herald:
Heed not him, but hear his words, and care not whence they come:

The viewless winds might whisper them—the billows roar them forth:

The mean, unconscious sedges sigh them in the ear of evening,

Or the mind of pride conceive, and the mouth of folly speak them.”

A P P E N D I X.

[The following article, which appeared in a late number of the New York Evangelist, will fill up a few remaining blank pages, and at the same time show that we are not alone in the views expressed by us in the foregoing Lectures in relation to the Manual, and the character of Odd-Fellowship in general.]

THE ODD-FELLOWS' MANUAL.

"We have lately taken the pains to look somewhat carefully through the Odd-Fellows' Manual, a handsomely got up volume published the last year, and containing, as the title page imports, the 'History, Principles, and Government of the Order, and the Instructions and Duties of every Degree, Station and Office in Odd-Fellowship; with Directions for Laying Corner-Stones and Dedicating Cemeteries,' with many other enumerated things; 'also Odes, with Music, for Various Occasions.' The author of the work is the Rev. Aaron B. Grosh, a rather prominent minister, we believe, of the Universalist order, who soars upward in the empyrean of authorship, dragging a string of Odd-Fellowship titles after him as long as the tail of a boy's kite.

"We gather from this manual that the Order of Odd-Fellows is a secret society, first established in England some forty years since, and introduced into this country in 1819; its professed objects being the mutual relief of members and their families, under the several specifications of 'visiting the sick, relieving the distressed, burying the dead, educating the orphan, and aiding the widow; together with the exercise of fraternal watch, care and discipline over each other.'

"The Order is ramified extensively throughout the country, having its lodges, insignia, grips, passwords,

&c., according to established masonic usage. Indeed, Odd-Fellowship is a sort of spurious heir of Masonry. It succeeded in its place, and attracted little attention until the odium excited against Masonry drove that institution into retirement. It may otherwise be characterized as a reformed Masonry, being substantially and formally the same thing; but guarded more carefully against abuse in several respects. We learn, for instance, that by a general law of the Order, ‘no refreshments of any kind, except water, shall at any time be allowed in the Lodge-room, or in any of the apartments or passages thereto belonging;’ a rule which, if enforced, will prevent the alliance formerly so notorious between secret societies and intemperance. It also professes not to interfere with the political action of its members.

“ Its aims are purely ‘benevolent’: that is, in consideration of three dollars in hand paid as admission fee, the regular payment of dues subsequently, with a round bonus on taking each of half a dozen degrees, through which the ‘brethren’ are expected to pass, you become entitled to receive from three to five dollars a week while disabled by sickness. If your wife dies, you may draw consolation to the amount of fifteen dollars from the treasury; when you yourself depart for the ‘Grand Lodge above,’ your weeping widow may find balm for her sorrows to the amount of forty dollars. You may wear any quantity of white aprons, red sashes, blue collars, regalia of ‘yellow metal,’ &c.; enough to satisfy the most ‘fussy and feathery’ ambition—you may be stuffed to the gorge with flattering titles; swamped, overloaded, fairly suffocated under the weight of honours the Lodge has to bestow—you may be a ‘worshipful Grand Sentinel,’ a ‘most excellent Grand High Priest,’ a ‘right worshipful Grand Representative,’ a ‘Grand Sire;’ a ‘Noble Grand;’ a ‘Past Grand,’ with forty other ‘Grand’ things, all cheap for cash.

“ Would that this was the worst of it. But these

follies lead on to serious evils. The Order of Odd-Fellows claims to be a religious institution—superlatively religious. It abounds in the religious phrase, at least as set forth in Mr. Grosh's book. It has borrowed the whole evangelical vocabulary, and can quote Scripture for its purpose with great unction. It aims at the regeneration of the world by the universal diffusion of the principles of Odd-Fellowship; in order to which universality, its religious requirements are reduced to the level of simple Deism. The adherents of the 'three principal religions of the world'—Judaism, Islamism, and Christianity—can unite in it on the recognition of the common 'Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man.' The three great virtues of the Order, 'Friendship, Love, and Truth,' set off with the attraction of white aprons and multifarious regalia, are expected to subdue the savage beast, and charm the disordered elements of society to peace.

"Emblematic of this is an illustration in gold on the cover of the manual, which represents barbarians and heathen of different tribes advancing toward a platform, on which stands a sleek-looking gentleman, bedecked all over with Odd-Fellowish insignia, at whose feet they throw down their various instruments of warfare. No church, of the present age, according to Mr. Grosh, is adequate to the work of bringing all mankind into one family of love and peace. This task devolves on Odd-Fellowship. All that the sibyls and prophets have said of the future golden age, is to be accomplished through her example and agency—a sufficiently modest claim, no doubt, for a 'Noble Grand' institution, well supplied with 'most excellent High Priests,' 'most worshipful Chaplains,' etc.

"Odd-Fellowship, in short, is the UNCHRISTIAN CHURCH; the church of those (as might be anticipated, from the fact that Universalists are among its leading champions) who wish to dispense with and ignore the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. A significant illustration of this occurs in the character of the prayers given in Mr. Grosh's manual, (which has the impi-

matur of a Grand Master,) to be used at dedications, funerals, etc. They are, without exception, Deistical prayers, such as a Jew and a Mohammedan might freely unite in. The name of the one Mediator between God and man does not once occur in them—not a solitary petition is offered in the name of Christ. They are sentimental and poetical, but not Christian.

" Amid multitudes of religious allusions, no whisper of such a thing as future retributions is permitted to occur. The institution presents a very easy and accommodating system of religion, which permits a man to talk in a pious and self-satisfied strain (with a white apron over his stomach) about charity, peace, the Universal Father, &c.; and thus to believe himself another Aben Benadham, while it brings him under no necessity of receiving the humbling doctrines of the gospel, of exercising repentance, practising prayer, or attending upon Christian ordinances."

" We repeat that this makes Odd-Fellowship the church of pharisaical Deism; of men who are averse to Christianity, and wish to make a merit of acts that belong to the routine of a mutual assistance society, as a righteousness before God.

" We do not mean to say that no Christian men have found their way into Odd-Fellows' Lodges—we know the contrary. We believe, however, they have in most cases dropped in unthinkingly, attracted by a particular phase of the Order, without appreciating its general bearings on religion and the church of Christ. We believe they can hardly feel themselves at home in the company of the worshipful and noble grand characters around the Lodge room. We do not envy them their feelings, moreover, in going through with the childish mummeries connected with admission and graduation through the several orders. An officer in a Christian church who permits himself to be linked in through this pretentious organization of men who are aiming to substitute the Lodge for the sanctuary, and Odd-Fellowship for the church of Christ, has, in our opinion, miserably mistaken his place.—H."

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